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Iconic terminal turns 25

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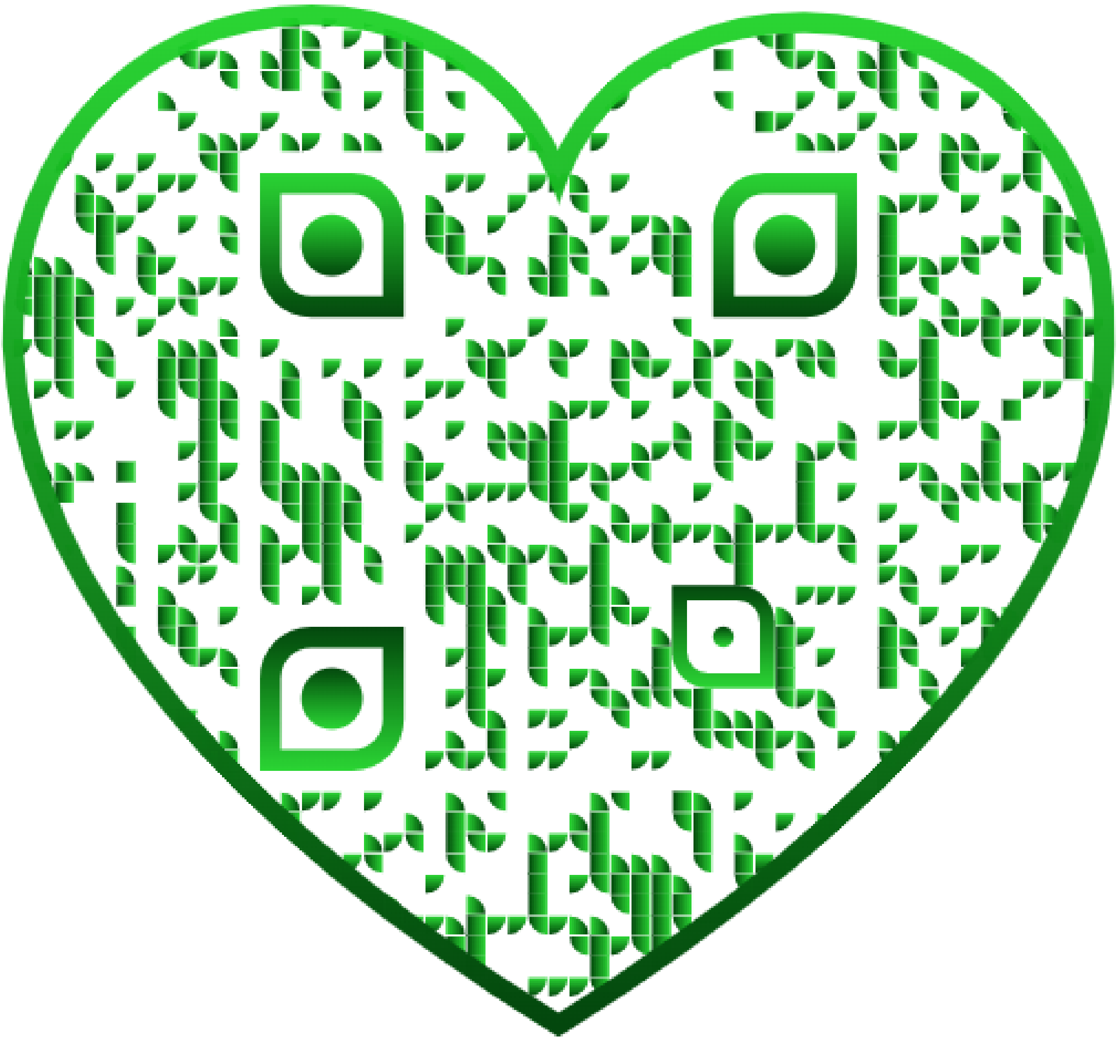

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Welcome

Hello and welcome to the November issue of *Airliner World*, incorporating *Airports of the World*.

If you flicked on the TV in the UK during the early 2000s, there's a good chance you'll remember *Airline* – the fly-on-the-wall series that took viewers behind the scenes at a little-known low-cost airline called easyJet. Narrated primarily by Tony Robinson, it revealed the chaos, camaraderie and curiosity of the operation, and in the process introduced millions to the bright orange brand. This month, that airline turns 30 – and much like an episode of *Airline*, we've packed this issue with drama, colour and no shortage of surprises. At its heart is a 40-page supplement dedicated to easyJet's first three decades.

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We begin with the founder himself. Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou has written an exclusive foreword recounting the origins of easyJet and the thinking that shaped it. Then our resident historian – and former easyJet cabin crew member – Lee Cross picks up the story, charting the airline's extraordinary rise from having just two leased Boeing 737-200s to becoming a pan-European giant flying hundreds of aircraft.

I had the privilege of talking with Kenton Jarvis, easyJet's relatively new chief executive, giving his first in-depth magazine interview. Our conversation ranged widely – from Heathrow slots to the Chinese-built COMAC C919 – while also exploring what it really means to steer one of Europe's largest airlines into its fourth decade.

Elsewhere, the supplement revisits the TV show that first brought easyJet to public attention and Jane Boulton, one of *Airline*'s best-known stars, reflects on her time in front of the cameras and on how clips of her appearances are now enjoying a second life on social media.

Of course, no airline story is complete without its people. Rob Veitch spoke with Michael Brown, easyJet's director of cabin services, about how the on-board product has changed since 1995, and with sustainability lead Lahiru Ranasinghe on the strategy to reach net zero by 2050. David Morgan, the carrier's chief operating officer, explained how AI is being harnessed to improve efficiency and why he's passionate about driving the airline's environmental ambitions. We also heard from the front line: two pilots who broke barriers to reach the cockpit, and 'Nana Pam', Europe's oldest serving cabin crew member, who at 75 still delights in taking to the skies.

A milestone like this deserves a celebration – so we're offering one lucky reader the chance to win two return tickets to anywhere on easyJet's network. Be sure to enter for your chance to fly orange for free! *See page 78 for more details.*

And if easyJet isn't your thing, don't worry – there's plenty more. In this issue you'll also find a profile of quirky Japanese regional Air Do; a tribute to Bilbao's stunning terminal as it turns 25; a look at the enduring appeal of the Airbus A340 in a twinjet world; coverage of Saudi low-cost challenger flyadeal; and a visit to the classic terminal at King County airport in Seattle.

Wherever you are in the world, I hope you enjoy this latest issue of *Airliner World*.

Thomas

Thomas Haynes
Editor

Airliner World
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COVER: ***EasyJet Switzerland A320-214, HB-JYA (c/n 4250), departs Geneva under blue skies in May 2019*** AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/ SIMONE C

BELOW: ***A scene from the early days of easyJet when the Boeing 737 ruled the roost*** EASYJET

FEATURES

22 **Do the right thing**
Siddharth Ganesh sketches out the history of Air Do, the Japanese airline connecting Hokkaido island to Honshu and Kyushu

30 **La paloma blanca**
As Bilbao's iconic terminal turns 25, Robert Veitch looks back at the life and times of architect Santiago Calatrava's white dove

EasyJet at 30

38 **Talkin' bout an orange revolution**
Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou writes exclusively for *Airliner World* about the story behind the company

40 **How 30 years have flown**
Lee Cross recounts the history of the UK's original low-cost carrier and how it has continued to innovate and evolve

50 **View from the top**
Thomas Haynes sits down with CEO Kenton Jarvis to discuss the airline's disruptive origins, hybrid model, and future growth

56 **"It's an aircraft, not a bus"**
Jane Boulton, one of the stars of the reality series *Airline*, talks about the highs and lows of one of the UK's best-loved TV shows

60 **Working the aisle**
Robert Veitch speaks to Michael Brown, director of cabin services, and learns how customer service has evolved through the years

65 **Striving for sustainability**
Lahiru Ranasinghe, director of sustainability, speaks in depth about the carrier's mission to achieve net zero by 2050

68 **Breaking barriers**
Hannah Wells and Nadia Ismail explain their journey to the flight deck, and why inspiring the next generation remains important

72 **Come on, let's fly**
Nana Pam, one of the world's most senior cabin crew members tells us why she has no intention of hanging up her wings anytime soon

74 **At the controls**
Chief operating officer David Morgan chats candidly about running one of Europe's busiest airlines and staying true to its founding values

78 **Competition time!**
Win a pair of tickets to anywhere across the easyJet network

80 **A classic at King County**
Andreas Rohde steps back in time to visit King County International Airport in Seattle to discover how the future once looked

84 **Survivor in the skies**
As the Airbus A340 nears retirement, Chris Croot charts the twilight years of one of aviation's most distinctive widebodies

106 **Becoming the Middle East's BIG deal**
As Saudi Arabian budget carrier flyadeal develops its size and reach, CEO Steven Greenway discusses strategy with Bernie Baldwin

this month

JA607A
POKÉMON

30

REGULARS

06 **News review**
Airliner World's comprehensive global news round-up

21 **Sky View**
Insights and opinion on the industry's hottest topics

92 **Deliveries**
The latest commercial acquisitions

96 **MRO News**
Maintenance, repair and overhaul insights and announcements

98 **Departure Gate**
Readers' comments and lighter stories

100 **UK Visitors**
Rarities spotted on UK runways

102 **Aviation Training**
A round-up of recent developments

104 **Air Safety**
Incidents and accident reports

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Last call for **Condor's 757s**

GERMAN LEISURE carrier Condor will close the book on more than three decades of Boeing operations this autumn with the retirement of its final Boeing 757-300. The milestone will mark the end of the Boeing era at the airline, which has flown aircraft from the US manufacturer for 35 years.

To mark the occasion, Condor will operate a special farewell flight on November 5, 2025, departing Frankfurt for Vienna. The outbound service will be followed by a ground celebration in the Austrian capital before the aircraft returns to Germany with what the airline promises will be "the world's highest party". Just 75 seats were available and were auctioned off on September 22.

"By bidding farewell to the Boeing 757, an era at Condor comes to an end," commented Christian Schmitt, the airline's chief operating officer. "At the same time, this marks the beginning of a new chapter with a modern, more efficient, and more sustainable Airbus fleet."

Condor's remaining seven Boeing 757s are expected to remain in service until the end of October, continuing to link Düsseldorf and Frankfurt with popular leisure destinations including Palma de Mallorca, Hurghada, Fuerteventura, and Gran Canaria. The type's final scheduled flights are currently planned as Düsseldorf-Palma-Düsseldorf on October 29 and Frankfurt-Hurghada-Frankfurt on November 2.

The 757 has been a Condor workhorse for decades, particularly on high-density holiday routes. With its departure, the carrier's transition to an all-Airbus fleet will gather pace, completing a fleet renewal strategy that has already seen the introduction of new-generation Airbus A320neo and A330neo aircraft. (Photo Condor)

Icelandair adds **more A321LRs**

ICELANDAIR HAS signed lease agreements with Chinese lessor CALC (China Aircraft Leasing Company) for two new Airbus A321LRs. The aircraft will be delivered directly from Airbus during the winter 2026/27 season, joining Icelandair's growing fleet of A321LRs which are gradually replacing its long-serving Boeing 757s.

Bogi Nils Bogason, CEO of Icelandair, said: "We are excited to welcome CALC as a new partner in our fleet development journey. The addition of these two Airbus A321LR aircraft supports our strategy to modernise our fleet with new, more efficient aircraft. Furthermore, it reflects our commitment to delivering an exceptional travel experience while strengthening our route network."

Icelandair has already begun introducing the A321LR into service. The additional pair come on top of existing leases for seven examples, of which four have already been handed over. The A321LR is set to become the backbone of its future transatlantic and European operations as the Boeing 757 fleet is gradually phased out. The first airframe from its 13-strong A321XLR firm order is due to arrive in 2029.

Maiden 777 for One Air

ONE AIR
G-ONEG
A9
A10

British cargo carrier One Air took delivery of its first Boeing 777F on August 25. The General Electric GE90-powered freighter, G-ONEG (c/n 68454), joined the East Midlands-based airline's all-747 fleet which comprises a pair of 747-433BDSFs and a single nose-loading 747-428ERF. The twinjet was ferried from Seattle/Paine Field to Cardiff, arriving on August 27 and entered service on September 5. According to ch-aviation, the aircraft is being leased from Moldovan airline Aerotranscargo JOHN GREGORY

EasyJet's COMAC consideration

EASYJET COULD consider acquiring the Chinese-built COMAC C919 during its next aircraft campaign if certification, safety and comfort standards are met, the carrier's CEO said.

In an exclusive interview with *Airliner World*, Kenton Jarvis said: "If the COMAC comes along one day, we'd have to see the economics. It's not certified, but we don't need an aircraft until 2034 so I think if we're doing another campaign in three years, there may be three people to talk to."

Jarvis joins Ryanair Group's CEO Michael O'Leary who in March also expressed an interest in acquiring the Chinese-built airliner.

The type is currently undergoing European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) certification, but reports earlier this year suggested this wouldn't be complete for another three to six years. *See page 50 for the full interview.*

Wizz Air to close **Vienna base**

WIZZ AIR has announced plans to close its base in Vienna, citing rising costs and a renewed focus on its Central and Eastern European core markets. The withdrawal will take place in two stages, beginning this autumn.

Two Airbus A321neos and two routes – to Bilbao and London/Gatwick – will be withdrawn on October 26, 2025, while the remaining three aircraft and all other routes will cease operation on March 15, 2026.

The low-cost carrier opened its Vienna base in 2018 and today operates a fleet of five A321neos on 28 routes to 20 countries. However, the airline said increasing airport charges, taxes and ground handling costs had made operations incompatible with its ultra-low-cost model.

Wizz Air added that it will support all affected staff, offering relocation to other bases and alternative roles where possible. Passengers with bookings beyond the suspension dates will be contacted directly and offered either a full refund, rebooking on another Wizz Air service, or comparable transport with another airline. (Photo Wizz Air)

Dreamliner delight in Deutschland

LUFTHANSA HAS welcomed its first brand-new Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, fresh from the factory in Seattle. The aircraft, D-ABPF (c/n 66817), which also debuts the airline's long-haul Allegris cabin concept at its main hub, landed in Frankfurt on August 30, before entering service on the Frankfurt-Toronto route from mid-October.

The milestone marks the first time Lufthansa has received a brand-new 787 directly from Boeing. The five Dreamliners already in the fleet were so-called "white tails" – originally destined for other carriers before being acquired by Lufthansa, with the first arriving in August 2022.

Lufthansa plans to take delivery of up to nine more 787-9s by the end of this year, averaging one every two weeks. In total, the carrier has 29 Dreamliners on order and expects to operate 78 long-haul aircraft fitted with Allegris interiors in the coming years – billed as the largest widebody fleet renewal in its history.

The new Allegris cabin offers redesigned products across all classes. In business class, customers can book private suites featuring chest-high walls, a 27in monitor, additional storage, a personal minibar, and a wardrobe. Premium economy and economy cabins are also refreshed, while certification for the new Dreamliner business class suites is expected soon.

Lufthansa has already been offering Allegris on select Munich-based long-haul flights since summer 2024 (see *Airliner World* May 2025), with more than half a million passengers having experienced the product so far. (Photo Lufthansa)

in brief

Norwegian Group carried 2.79 million passengers in August, closing a record-breaking summer season. The figure included 2.42 million on **Norwegian** flights and 366,216 with **Widerøe**, which set monthly records throughout the summer. Norwegian reported an 86% load factor, operating an average of 91 aircraft, while Widerøe achieved 77.5%. CEO Geir Karlsen hailed the strong performance, noting solid punctuality and regularity.

KLM will serve 161 destinations this winter (92 European, 69 intercontinental), offering around 25,000 connections worldwide between October 26, 2025, and March 28, 2026. Capacity will rise 6% year-on-year, driven by growth to India (+28%) and the Caribbean (+17%). To support this expanded network, the airline will also take delivery of its 15th and final Boeing 787-10 and three new Airbus A321neos during the season.

Glasgow-based **Loganair** will trial a new weekly service between the Isle of Man and Southampton this winter. Marketed by the airline as a "same plane" flight, the route operates via Manchester without passengers needing to change aircraft. It will run on Saturdays from January 10 to March 28, 2026, with departures from Ronaldsway at 14:10 and returns from Southampton at 17:15. If demand proves sufficient, the airline said the route could become permanent.

Aer Lingus will launch a new Dublin to Raleigh-Durham service in April 2026 as part of its largest-ever transatlantic summer schedule. The year-round route, operated up to five times weekly by Airbus A321XLRs, will be the carrier's 26th North American destination. Summer 2026 will also see a third daily flight to New York/JFK and Boston/Logan, frequency boosts to Nashville, Indianapolis, Orlando and Shannon-Boston, reflecting strong demand and Aer Lingus' expanding Dublin hub strategy.

AEGEAN and **IndiGo** have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for a codeshare partnership, aiming to expand connectivity between India, Greece, Europe and South Asia. IndiGo will launch six weekly flights to Athens in January 2026, while AEGEAN will begin five weekly services to Delhi in March, followed by three weekly to Mumbai. Subject to regulatory approvals, the agreement will see the carriers place their codes on select routes across each other's networks.

Brussels boosts A320neo order

brussels
AIRLINES
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OO-SBA

BRUSSELS AIRLINES has confirmed plans to add five more Airbus A320neo aircraft to its fleet, bringing its total commitment to 13 examples of the type.

The airline currently operates five A320neos, with three more due in the coming months – including the next delivery direct from Toulouse in November. The latest order, approved by the carrier's board of directors, covers a further five aircraft for handover from 2027 onwards. The new aircraft will primarily replace older-generation models, with one dedicated to fleet growth.

"Brussels Airlines has worked very hard to achieve a cost structure that allows the airline to be sustainably profitable, enabling us to reinvest in our company," said Dorothea von Boxberg, the airline's CEO. "The A320neo reduces our environmental footprint and offers a more pleasant experience for our passengers. We are very happy to welcome more of these state-of-the-art aircraft to our fleet."

With 14 A319-100s, 16 A320-200s, and five A320neos, the Airbus narrowbody family forms the backbone of Brussels Airlines' short- and medium-haul operations, while the airline is also investing in its long-haul network. Its 11-strong fleet of Airbus A330-300s is set to expand to 13, with new intercontinental cabins arriving from 2027. (Photo Brussels Airlines)

Stored superjumbo returns to flight

AN EARLY-BUILD Airbus A380 has been brought out of almost five years of storage in France and flown to Dresden for maintenance. The A380-841, 9H-MIP (c/n 006), was ferried from Tarbes/Lourdes to Elbe Flugzeugwerke's (EFW) facility on September 12, reaching a maximum cruise altitude of just 23,000ft during the flight.

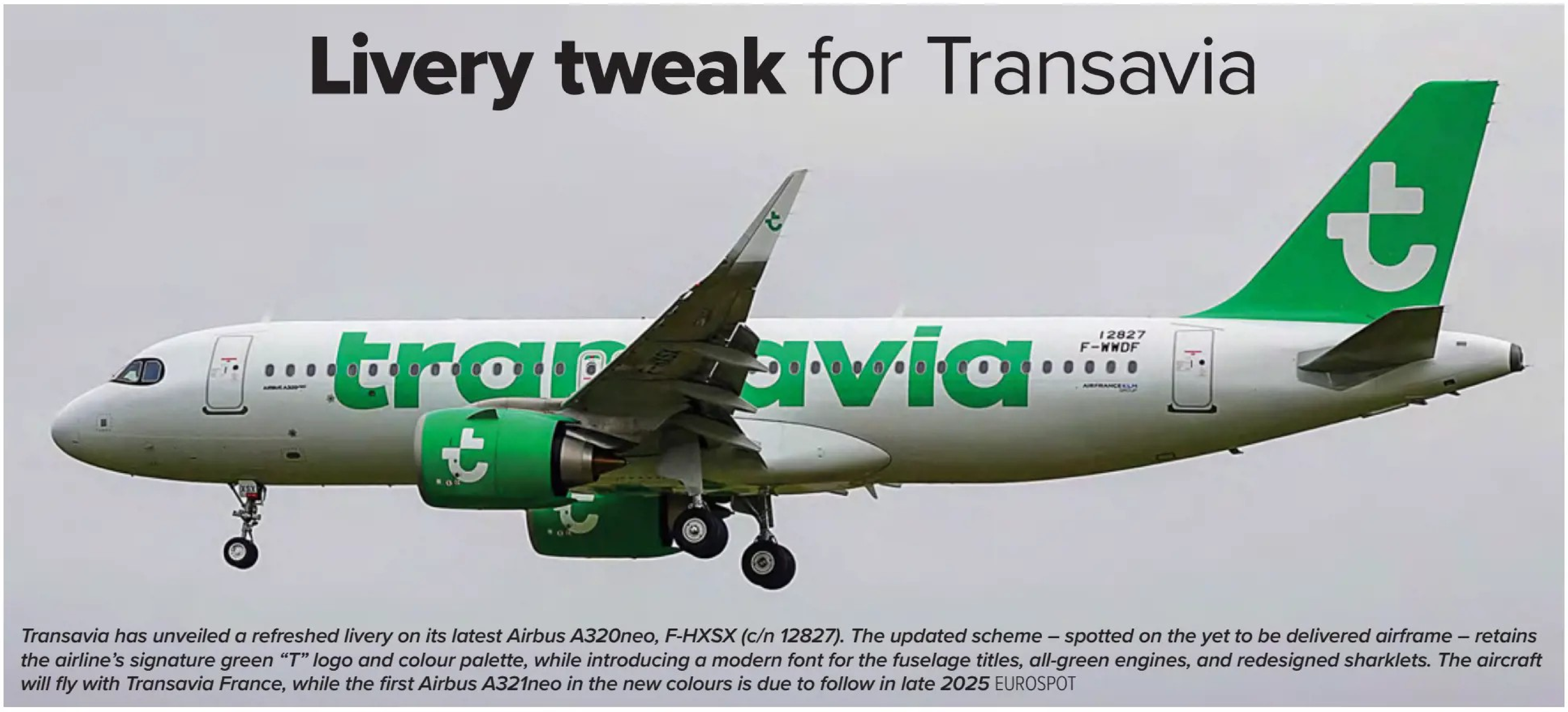
EFW confirmed the arrival on social media, stating: "EFW and our new customer ALG, represented by Gregory Thornton and Martyn Anderson, are proud to announce the arrival of MSN006, their first A380 to be serviced in Dresden, on behalf of their client. The aircraft is in very good condition and we are looking forward to completing the final maintenance tasks before this fascinating aircraft will return to operation."

The airframe was originally delivered to Singapore Airlines in March 2008 and withdrawn from use in November 2017. It later joined ACMI specialist Hi Fly Malta in July 2018, operating under wet lease contracts until December 2020, before being placed into storage at Tarbes in March 2021. At one stage it had been earmarked as the launch aircraft for UK start-up Global Airlines, though that plan was abandoned.

Not Too Late For Coral Reefs

Media reports and Elbe Flugzeugwerke's published customer details suggest the aircraft is linked to a UK-based business, but its precise intentions and future role remain unclear. (Photo Airbus/A Doumenjou)

Livery tweak for Transavia



Transavia has unveiled a refreshed livery on its latest Airbus A320neo, F-HXSX (c/n 12827). The updated scheme – spotted on the yet to be delivered airframe – retains the airline's signature green "T" logo and colour palette, while introducing a modern font for the fuselage titles, all-green engines, and redesigned sharklets. The aircraft will fly with Transavia France, while the first Airbus A321neo in the new colours is due to follow in late 2025 EUROSPOT

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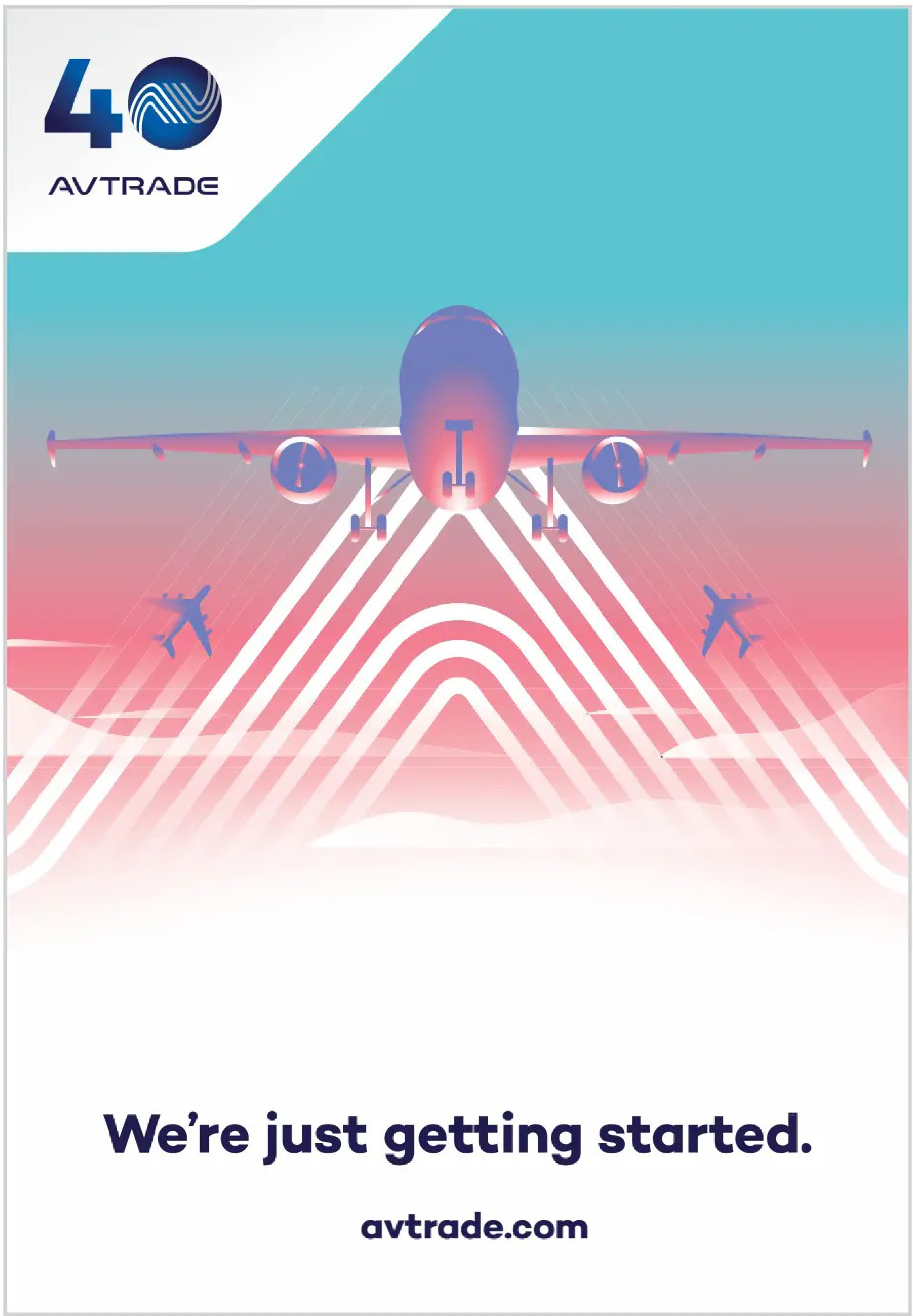

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Second restored **Tu-214 for Red Wings**

MOSCOW/DOMODEDOVO-BASED RED Wings has introduced a second restored Tupolev Tu-214 to its fleet. The Aviadvigatel PS-90A-powered jet, RA-64549 (c/n 42507013), started life with Transaero in November 2008 before being withdrawn from service in July 2015 following the airline's collapse. It was then placed into storage at Kazan International Airport.

Andrey Volkov, director of the airline's fleet operations department, said: "During the work, specialists updated the aircraft's key systems. A full diagnostic and necessary upgrades were performed on components and assemblies. All work was carried out in compliance with technical regulations and quality standards required for passenger aircraft. The updated Tu-214 will soon begin regular flights to Georgia and Israel."

The Red Wings fleet currently consists of 22 Yakovlev Superjet 100s, plus a single Tupolev Tu-214, RA-64518 (c/n 44709018), and a single refurbished Tu-204, RA-64043 (c/n 1450743764043). (Photo Aviation Image Network/BaoLuo)

TRANSAERO
Tu-214
RA-64549
ПС-90А

Aeroflot to add further MC-21s

RUSSIA'S FLAG carrier Aeroflot is planning to add 90 domestic Yakovlev MC-21 jets by the end of the year, according to Russian news agency TASS. The airline group's CEO, Sergey Aleksandrovsky, told reporters at the Eastern Economic Forum that Aeroflot had already signed a firm deal for the first 18 aircraft and is still in discussions for the following 90 airframes. According to data from ch-aviation, the airline has already ordered 198 MC-21s. Aleksandrovsky also said that the group's fleet could increase to 460 by 2030. By 2033-2035, it plans to have around 50% of its fleet made up of Russian-built aircraft.

Meanwhile, Aeroflot has plans to purchase the remaining 49% of JSC Aeromar, the country's biggest in-flight catering company, from Germany's Lufthansa Group, after receiving government approval for the deal. Lufthansa has been trying to offload its shareholding in the company since September 2022. (Photo UAC)

73055
MC-21
73055
005
MC-21-310

US lifts restrictions **on Belavia**

Belavia
EW-457PA

THE US has lifted some sanctions on Belarusian carrier Belavia, as part of its effort to "fully normalise" relations with Minsk. The move comes after Belarus released 52 political prisoners, which included several foreign nationals. According to the US State Department, the airline will still be under sanction by the US, but will receive some relief to enable it to service and buy components for its existing fleet. According to ch-aviation, Belavia currently fields 19 aircraft, which include Boeing 737-300/800s and MAX 8s, as well as several Embraer jets.

The airline has been under US and EU sanctions following the forced diversion of Ryanair flight FR4978 to Minsk in May 2021. The aircraft had been flying from Athens to Vilnius when it was ordered by Belarusian ATC to land in Minsk following a bomb alert. When the jet touched down, Belarusian journalist and opposition activist Roman Protasevich and his girlfriend, Sofia Sapega, were arrested by the Belarusian security service. (Photo Belavia)

Aurora adds **Il-114-300s**

AURORA AIRLINES has signed a letter of intent to lease three Ilyushin Il-114-300 turboprops. The agreement was confirmed during the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok and deliveries are expected to commence in 2027.

Aurora CEO Konstantin Sukhorebrik said: "The delivery of new domestic aircraft is essential for air carriers and the aviation industry as a whole. For our airline, which provides socially significant transportation in the Far Eastern Federal District, this is another step toward fulfilling the goal set by the President of improving transport accessibility in the region. Cost efficiency, technical reliability and passenger comfort are what the airline and our passengers expect from the new aircraft."

The Klimov TV7-117ST-01-powered aircraft will be leased from Russia's biggest leasing company, GTLK. The biggest customer of United Aircraft Corporation (UAC), GTLK recently signed a deal with the state-owned aircraft manufacturer for 65 of the regional turboprops. New GTLK head Mikhail Parnev has said that the aircraft has much potential in the country and is set to become the aircraft of choice for regional routes, as well as an ideal replacement for the ageing Antonov An-24 and An-26 fleets.

Meanwhile, the Ilyushin division chief at UAC, Daniil Brenerman, has stated that the certification process for the Il-114-300 is expected to be completed by the end of 2025. Speaking at the forum, he said that the prototypes have so far carried out more than 350 flights, adding that the type had been specifically designed for operations in far eastern Russia, where Aurora is based.

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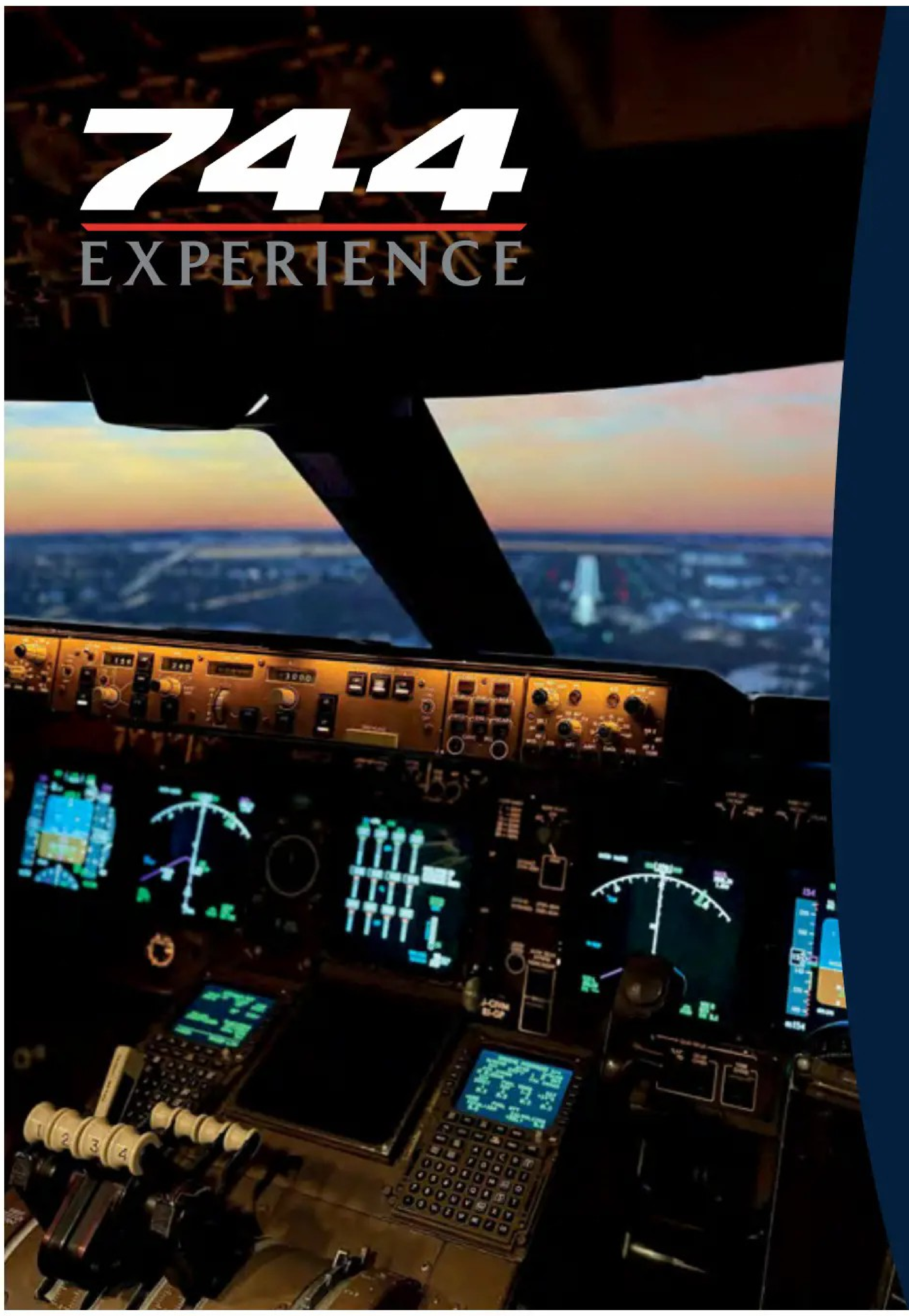

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First Riyadh Air 787 nears completion

RIYADH AIR'S much-anticipated launch is edging closer, with the carrier revealing that its first 787-9, to be registered HZ-RXAA, is nearing completion on Boeing's assembly line. Taking delivery of the first new aircraft in the Riyadh Air purple colour scheme will be an important step towards the Saudi start-up's entry into service, which has been pushed back due to Boeing 787 delivery delays.

"Our first 787-9 aircraft is getting ready to roll off the assembly line and soon wear Riyadh Air's iconic livery," the carrier said on X, adding: "Thank you to our partners at Boeing for bringing this milestone to life."

CEO Tony Douglas has said the airline will start flying passengers by the end of 2025. However, it was not clear when this would happen; a rumoured launch date of October 26 was to be confirmed. Over the summer, the new Saudi carrier announced an order for up to 50 Airbus A350-1000 aircraft – 25 firm orders with purchase rights for an additional 25. Riyadh Air now has up to 182 aircraft on order and will operate a three-type fleet. The carrier has an order for 60 A321neos with Airbus, and up to 72 787-9 Dreamliners with Boeing, comprising 39 confirmed airframes and options for a further 33. (Photo Riyadh Air)

Etihad's bumper **2025**

ABU DHABI-BASED Etihad Airways has achieved the strongest six-month performance in its history, with passenger traffic reaching 10.2 million in the first half of 2025. The record figure marks a 17% year-on-year increase. The airline's fleet also passed a significant milestone, surpassing 100 aircraft after the delivery of more than 20 new jets in the past 18 months.

AIRBUS
214
ETIHAD

The expansion has enabled Etihad to grow its network and achieve a profit after tax of AED 1.1 billion (£226m), with revenues rising 16% year-on-year. Growth was driven by strong demand across both passenger and cargo segments, the airline reported. In April, Etihad took delivery of its sixth Airbus A350, and May saw the reintroduction of a seventh A380. In the same month, the airline announced an agreement for an order for 28 widebody aircraft with Boeing, a mix of 787 Dreamliners and 777Xs, during President Trump's visit to the United Arab Emirates. In July, the airline added five new aircraft to its fleet, including its first A321LR (see *Airliner World* October 2025). This marked the highest number of deliveries the airline has ever received in a single month.

A321LR made headlines for its two fully enclosed first class private suites. Etihad said it was "bringing widebody luxury to narrowbody operations for the first time in the region" with the new product. The aircraft entered into service in early August with its inaugural flight to Phuket in Thailand.

Etihad has launched or announced 27 new destinations in 2025 alone, bringing the total number of routes to 90. Antonoaldo Neves, chief executive officer of Etihad Airways, said: "We are already ahead of the growth levels we set in our strategy; we remain focused on execution and are committed to expansion built on efficiency, service and innovation. With new aircraft joining the fleet, new routes opening and our premium offering flourishing, Etihad is setting new standards in aviation." (Photo Airbus)

Air Peace looks west

NIGERIA'S AIR Peace is expanding its international presence with the start of nonstop flights from Lagos to São Paulo, Brazil – its first scheduled service to South America. The development comes as the airline continues to widen its long-haul network, with new flights from Abuja to London also set to strengthen its UK offering.

AIR PEACE
CHINONSO ONYEMA

Speaking at Lagos Murtala Muhammed International Airport following the inaugural Brazil service, Nigeria's minister of aviation and aerospace development, Festus Keyamo, said: "What we are seeing today is the first fruit of the diplomatic shuttle of [Nigeria's] President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to Brazil. Brazil is the biggest economy in South America, and Nigeria is considered the biggest economy in Africa. Connecting these two economies was very key to both presidents."

The new route eliminates the need for lengthy connections through Europe or the Middle East. With four Boeing 777s now in its fleet, Air Peace is positioning itself as a bigger player in the African aviation market. The fourth newly acquired 777-200ER, 5N-CEG (c/n 33395), will be deployed in the next two months for the inaugural long-haul flights from Abuja to London's Heathrow and Gatwick airports. Since March 2024, Air Peace has operated daily flights from Lagos to Gatwick. From October 2025, the carrier will launch Abuja-London flights; four days to Heathrow and three days to Gatwick. In recent months, the airline has made no secret of its desire to expand its operation from Heathrow, which it sees as the premier UK airport, and one which better supports transit traffic. Air Peace said it was also exploring "opening new routes into key European cities." (Photo Air Peace)

SAA boosts flight schedule

SOUTH AFRICAN Airways is stepping up capacity across its network to capture what it says is strong seasonal demand for the upcoming southern hemisphere summer, adding services to Lagos, Accra and São Paulo from October through to February. The uptick in demand is another step in the airline's recovery since exiting its business rescue phase in 2021, with the flag carrier recently reporting a 23% year-on-year revenue rise to 7bn South African Rand (£296,000), for its recently audited 2023/24 results. From October 1, 2025, Johannesburg-Accra flights grew to six weekly, followed by Lagos on October 6 and São Paulo on December 10. The extra services run until February 11, 2026.

"[SAA] is strengthening its network with more flights, more frequencies and more opportunities to connect Africa to the world," said Tebogo Tsimane, SAA's chief commercial officer. The additional flying comes despite ongoing industry pressures, including high fuel costs, global aircraft shortages and currency headwinds, which contributed to a net loss of R354m in Fiscal Year 2023/24, versus R210m profit the previous year.

However, the carrier retains a strong cash balance of R1.4bn, remains debt-free and continues to invest in rebuilding its fleet and network. Group CEO John Lamola said: "We have strengthened the channels of our revenue streams and cost containment measures; we have a debt-free, asset-rich balance sheet that is supporting the steady growth of the airline and the recovery of SAA as a global aviation brand."

Qatar's all-economy A321

QATAR AIRWAYS is preparing to add three Airbus A321neo aircraft to its fleet, configured entirely in an all-economy seating layout. The move comes in response to growing demand for seats in that cabin.

The Doha-based carrier, which separately has 50 A321neos on order due from 2026, has not previously operated the type in its all-economy layout. The aircraft has a 236-seat configuration, and will operate on routes including Doha to Medina, Peshawar and Tbilisi from October. The move is notable for the juxtaposition with regional rival Etihad, which recently added its first A321LR with first class suites.

Qatar Airways said there was strong economy class demand on specific routes within its network, which has driven the decision. The flag carrier is also upping frequencies on flights to more than a dozen destinations this winter, using its widebody fleet. This includes London/Heathrow, which is being increased from eight daily flights to up to ten, its highest-ever frequency, and Manchester which goes from 21 weekly flights up to 24. Berlin and Frankfurt are also going three-times daily, and Tokyo/Narita is increasing to double daily.

Air Côte d'Ivoire receives A330neo

IVORY COAST flag carrier Air Côte d'Ivoire has taken delivery of its first Airbus A330-900, marking the introduction of widebody aircraft to its fleet. The aircraft, TU-TRG (c/n 2086), the first of two on order, features a four-class configuration with four seats in first-class, 44 in business, 21 in premium economy and 173 in economy. The second airframe, TU-TRH (c/n 2098), is expected before the end of the year. The delivery flight from Toulouse to Abidjan carried five tonnes of humanitarian supplies. This was in collaboration with the Airbus Foundation and Aviation Sans Frontières.

The airline reported: "The A330neo will play a key role in Air Côte d'Ivoire's expansion plans." The aircraft was initially scheduled to enter service in 2024, but multiple delays postponed its delivery. It is equipped with Airbus' Airspace cabin, offering larger overhead bins, a new lighting system and access to a state-of-the-art in-flight entertainment system. Air Côte d'Ivoire serves 22 destinations. The A330-900 fleet will play a key role in the airline's expansion plans to Europe, starting on the Abidjan/Félix Houphouët Boigny to Paris/Charles de Gaulle route, and later to destinations in the Middle East and North America. Six flights per week will initially operate to Paris, increasing to seven from November 15. The airline previously operated only medium and short-haul aircraft; namely three Airbus A320s, five A319s and four de Havilland Canada DHC-8-400s. (Photo Airbus)

Air Côte d'Ivoire
1st A330neo

in brief

Flydubai has signed a new interline partnership with Romania's national airline **TAROM**, giving passengers access to 15 onward destinations via Bucharest. Flydubai said the agreement would offer its customers improved connections across Eastern and Central Europe. The low-cost UAE carrier operates double daily flights from Dubai to Bucharest.

Emirates will deploy its new Airbus A350 on the daily Dubai-Hangzhou service from October 26, 2025, just three months after launching flights to the Chinese city. The deployment of the A350 also introduces premium economy to Hangzhou. The Airbus widebody – the first new aircraft type to join the Emirates fleet since 2008 – is already used on services to Bahrain, Kuwait, Baghdad, Oslo, Ho Chi Minh City, Dammam and Tunis, among others.

All three of **Kenya Airways'** grounded Boeing 787-8s – a third of the airline's widebody fleet – will be back in service by the end of 2025, boosting the African carrier's long-haul capacity. One aircraft resumed operations in July, with the remaining two due later this year. The Dreamliners were grounded due to maintenance delays caused by bottlenecks in the global supply chain as well as engine shortages.

Royal Jordanian will launch nonstop flights to Dallas/Fort Worth from Amman in May 2026, marking the first direct link between Texas and Jordan. The year-round service will run four times weekly on Boeing 787-8s with 270 seats. The route is Royal Jordanian's fifth US destination, alongside Washington/Dulles, Chicago/O'Hare, New York/JFK and Detroit/Metropolitan airports.

Regional lessor TrueNoord has handed over two ATR 72-600 turboprops to **TACV Cabo Verde Airlines** on long-term lease, marking the type's debut in the carrier's fleet. Based at Praia International Airport, the aircraft will strengthen inter-island services. D4-CCM (c/n 1512) arrived in Praia first on July 11, with D4-CCN (c/n 1514) following on September 15. As the carrier's chairman and CEO, Pedro Barros said: "The lease of these two aircraft marks an important step for TACV Cabo Verde Airlines, better positioning us to enhance connectivity across our island nation."

Ethiopian Airlines has opened a new airport at Yabello in Ethiopia's southern Oromia region, and is launching passenger services to the facility. Built at a cost of more than one billion Ethiopian Birr (£5.1m), the airline-backed project includes a new airfield, access roads and a temporary terminal. Airline CEO Mesfin Tasew said: "The completion of the Yabello Airport project demonstrates Ethiopian Airlines' commitment to advancing aviation infrastructure that transforms lives and connects communities across Ethiopia."

Avelo's E2 order

HOUSTON-BASED LOW-COST carrier Avelo Airlines has confirmed a major deal with Embraer, placing a firm order for 50 E195-E2 jets, with options for 50 additional aircraft. Deliveries are scheduled to start in the first half of 2027. The agreement will make Avelo the first US carrier to operate Embraer's largest and newest commercial aircraft.

The E195-E2 features Embraer's Enhanced Take-off System (E2TS), an automated take-off capability, which also enables improved short-field performance. Avelo said these capabilities would allow it to access new airports and optimise routes within its domestic network.

Avelo CEO Andrew Levy said: "We are thrilled to partner with Embraer and bring this best-in-class small narrowbody aeroplane to the United States marketplace. Our customers will love the E2's comfortable two-two seating, in-seat power ports, large overhead bins and quiet cabin. The aircraft's exceptional performance, size and efficiency make it the perfect choice for the future growth of our scheduled service network."

Avelo operates 22 Boeing 737NGs, serving 47 US cities and three international destinations, carrying nearly eight million passengers since launching in 2021. The Texas-based budget carrier, which has struggled financially since its launch, has faced a backlash in recent months after agreeing a deal with the US government to charter its aircraft for migrant deportation flights. (Photo Embraer)

Air Canada reveals **A321XLR routes**

AIR CANADA is set to expand its international network with the introduction of its first Airbus A321XLR. The carrier announced that Montréal-Palma de Mallorca would be the first new route for the single-aisle aircraft, starting next June. Deliveries of the XLR to Air Canada will begin in early 2026. Configured with 14 lie-flat business class seats and 168 economy seats, Air Canada hopes its A321XLR will offer a widebody experience in a narrowbody jet.

This is exactly the type of long, thin route Airbus marketed the XLR as enabling. Existing Air Canada links, including Montréal-Toulouse and Montréal-Edinburgh, will also transition to the XLR. Future expansions are also expected from the airline's Toronto, Ottawa and Halifax bases.

Mark Galardo, EVP and CCO, and president, cargo at Air Canada, said the XLR "unlocks new, exciting global opportunities with its widebody range and enhanced on-board product".

The airline also announced new routes from Montréal to Catania in Sicily, and from Toronto to Shanghai and Budapest, using other aircraft types in it's fleet. "Air Canada is the first Canadian carrier to offer customers nonstop flights to these sought-after Mediterranean destinations, and the only airline operating scheduled service from Canada to Sicily and Mallorca," Galardo added.

JetBlue's final E190 flight

NEW YORK-BASED JetBlue has retired the last airframe in its Embraer E190 fleet, completing its transition to an all-Airbus operation. The final revenue E190 flight, using N329JB (c/n 19000433), took place on September 9, 2025, operating service JBU190 between New York/JFK and Boston/Logan, the same cities where the aircraft first entered service in 2005.

Warren Christie, JetBlue's chief operating officer, piloted the flight just as he did for the inaugural journey 20 years ago, alongside several other original crew members, marking the end of nearly two decades of E190 operations. "I am proud to operate today's flight, as it marks a significant evolution of our fleet," said Christie. "The E190 was instrumental in our early years and proved to deliver on critical connectivity in short-haul markets, allowing us to grow into new regions, especially in our New York and Boston focus cities. As one of the originating crew members to launch the E190 at JetBlue, it is an honour to pilot our final E190 revenue flight."

The airline divested its remaining E190 aircraft to multiple buyers, including the aviation asset management company Werner Aero, which took delivery of 12 aircraft earlier this year. The retirement coincides with JetBlue's 50th Airbus A220-300 delivery. Simplifying the fleet to Airbus A320 and A220 families, the aircraft enables route expansion, including transcontinental services beyond the E190's capability, supporting JetBlue's 'JetForward' growth strategy. (Photo AirTeamImages.com/Andres Meneses)

WestJet bags **Boeings**

WESTJET
WESTJET

CANADIAN AIRLINE WestJet has confirmed a deal with Boeing to acquire 60 737 MAX 10 aircraft, alongside seven 787-9 Dreamliners, with options for 25 and four additional aircraft, respectively. Scheduled for delivery until 2034, the order expands WestJet's fleet growth plans and brings its firm order book with Boeing to 123 aircraft.

WestJet CEO Alexis von Hoensbroech said: "With the addition of these aircraft, WestJet has the largest order book of any airline in Canada and will double our fleet of Dreamliners. These highly efficient and comfortable aircraft are critical to the growth and renewal of our fleet and will also significantly improve our fuel consumption."

The order is the largest Canadian Boeing purchase in history. WestJet currently operates 192 aircraft, including 150 Boeing 737s, seven 787s and 35 de Havilland Canada DHC-8-400s, with an average fleet age of roughly ten years. The carrier began operations in 1996 with three Boeing 737 aircraft.

Separately, WestJet has announced an interline partnership with Copa Airlines, giving passengers access to 37 Copa destinations in Central and South America. Copa travellers will gain access to WestJet's North American network. (Photo Boeing)

Aerolíneas Argentinas back in black

FLAG CARRIER Aerolíneas Argentinas has reported a full-year profit for the first time since returning to state ownership in 2008, marking a significant turnaround for the airline.

The firm's newly released 2024 financial results show a net profit of $129m and an operating profit of $56.6m. It is the first time in 16 years that the company has operated without requiring financial assistance from the state. The performance represents a sharp reversal from 2023, when Aerolíneas Argentinas posted a net loss of $291.7m and an operating deficit of $390m. Over the 2008-2023 period, the carrier received an estimated $8bn in government support, averaging annual losses of about $400m. Tighter financial discipline, lower fuel costs and a restructuring of operations are behind the improved results. The airline withdrew from unprofitable routes and reduced staffing levels, with around 1,600 employees leaving under voluntary retirement programmes.

That said, Aerolíneas Argentinas is still on the hunt for new destinations. The carrier recently announced the introduction of new nonstop flights to Aruba, the first time the airline has connected Argentina with the Caribbean island. Starting in the southern hemisphere's summer season, the carrier will offer a total of five weekly services to Aruba. The schedule includes three weekly flights from Buenos Aires, alongside weekly services from both Córdoba and Mendoza. All routes will be operated using Boeing 737 MAX aircraft.

Southwest to **Europe?**

US LOW-COST carrier Southwest Airlines is evaluating the possibility of transatlantic services, a move that would represent a significant departure from its North America-focused strategy and may be accompanied by new passenger offerings such as airport lounges. Raising the prospect of a long-haul launch in the future, CEO Robert Jordan said a European network would require the airline to introduce aircraft beyond its current all-Boeing 737 fleet: "We are going to continue to pursue the customer and provide the things that they want," Jordan said during the US Chamber of Commerce Global Aviation Summit. "We've got... millions of folks who love Southwest Airlines. They would us love to fly to Europe, as an example." Later speaking to CNBC, he added: "Whatever customers need in 2025, 2030, we won't take any of that off the table... We'll do it the Southwest way, but we're not going to say, 'We would never do that'."

Jordan noted while that would ultimately require a widebody aircraft within the fleet, the airline could initially take a "more risk-tolerant" approach by deploying a narrowbody on such routes. Southwest is in the midst of a wider transformation aimed at capturing more revenue from passengers willing to pay for ancillaries such as checked bags, and will introduce assigned seating. Jordan has also raised the prospect of different cabins to extract additional revenue. "We don't have a true premium product... A first class. A business class," he said. (Photo Southwest Airlines)

Southwest
Southwest.com

in brief

United Airlines will restart services to Tel Aviv from Chicago/O'Hare and Washington/Dulles this autumn, marking its first operations on the routes since 2023. Flights from Chicago begin on November 1, operating four times weekly, while Washington launches a day later with three weekly rotations. United currently offers twice daily flights between Tel Aviv and New York/Newark, and says it has flown more to Tel Aviv this year than any other US airline.

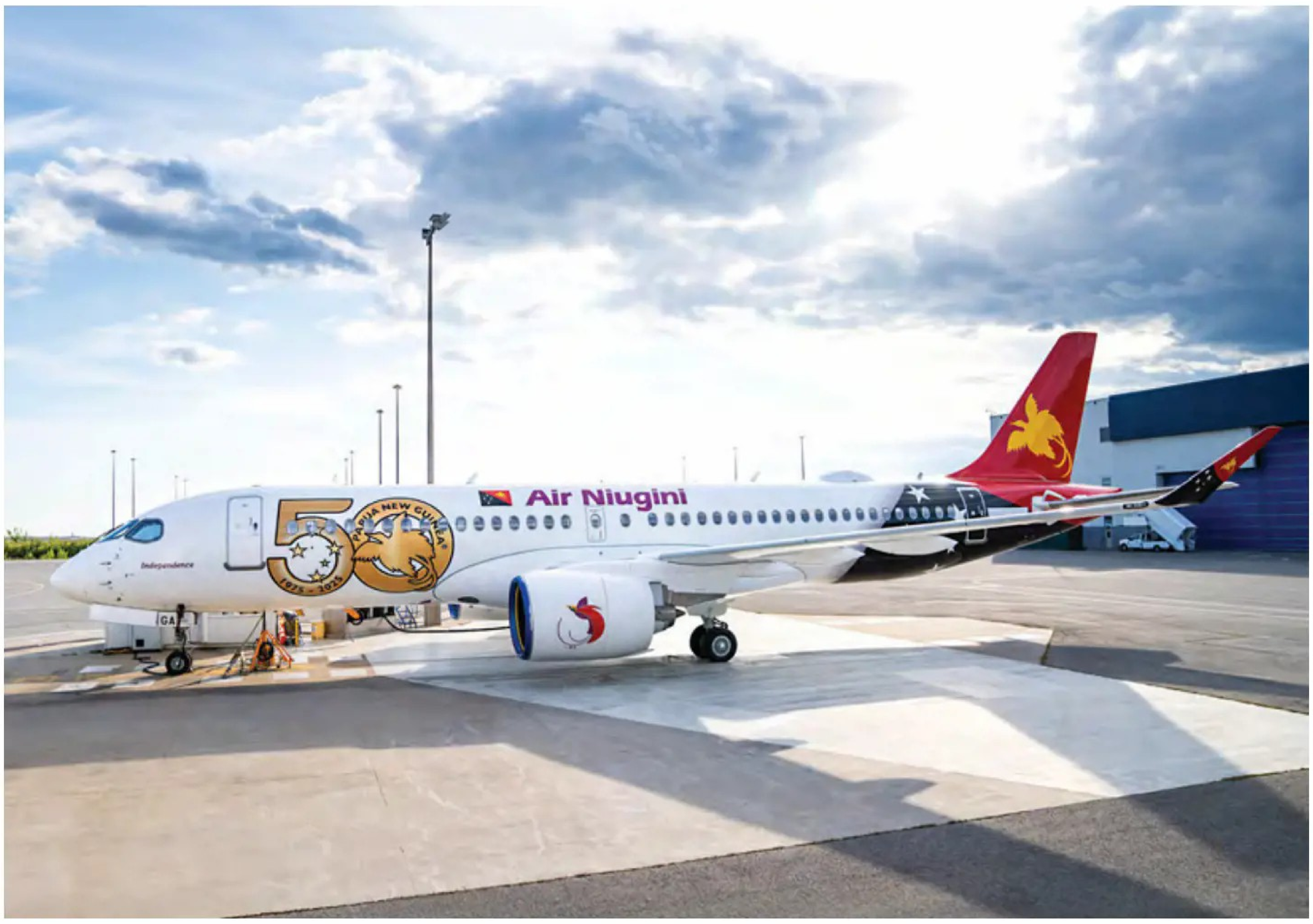
Delta launched a "Route Race" at the end of August to give its SkyMiles loyalty club members and employees the chance to decide which Mediterranean city should be added to the airline's network in summer 2026. Voting ran from August 25-29, with Malta, Ibiza and Sardinia on the shortlist. Results were split – SkyMiles members favoured Sardinia, while employees chose Malta – so Delta opted to add both destinations.

BOC Aviation has finalised a deal with Airbus for two A321neo and one A320neo, all of which will go on long-term lease to Chilean ultra-low-cost carrier **JetSMART Airlines**. Deliveries are scheduled for 2027. "These fuel-efficient A320neo Family aircraft will enable JetSMART to expand its footprint in the growing Latin America market," said BOC Aviation CEO Steven Townend.

US regional carrier **SkyWest** has taken a stake in Dutch start-up Maeve Aerospace, backing the development of the MAEVE Jet hybrid-electric regional aircraft. As part of the deal, SkyWest has gained exclusive launch customer rights for the new aircraft, which is envisaged to seat 76 to 100 passengers, with reduced fuel burn, up to 95% lower emissions using sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), cruise speeds around Mach 0.75 and short field performance.

Cargo carrier **Kalitta Air** has received the world's first three Boeing 777-300ERSF freighters converted from passenger aircraft. The trio – N770CK (c/n 32792), N771CK (c/n 32791) and N778CK (c/n 32789) – were delivered by lessor AerCap and include the certification prototype. Kalitta, launch customer for the groundbreaking conversion programme, was due to introduce the aircraft into commercial service in October as part of its transition away from ageing 747 freighters. The Michigan-based cargo carrier has a total of seven 777-300ERSFs on order.

A220 for **Air Niugini**



AIR NIUGINI has welcomed its first Airbus A220-300, as the Papua New Guinea flag carrier progresses with its fleet renewal strategy. The aircraft, P2-PGA (c/n 55388), is being leased from US lessor Azorra and makes the airline the 25th operator of the A220 worldwide. Named *Independence*, the aircraft departed the Airbus final assembly line at Mirabel on its delivery flight to Port Moresby, routing via Vancouver, Honolulu and Fiji.

The delivery coincided with Papua New Guinea's 50th anniversary of independence, celebrated through a commemorative livery on the A220. The aircraft is the first of three of the -300 being acquired from Azorra.

In parallel, Air Niugini has eight A220-100s on firm order directly from Airbus. The -300 variant delivered in September is configured with 138 seats and will serve both regional and medium-haul markets, complementing the smaller -100 version which targets the 100-135 seat segment.

Air Niugini's acting chief operating officer, Samiu Taufa, said: "This is more than just the arrival of a new aircraft – it is the dawn of a new era for Air Niugini and Papua New Guinea. The A220 represents our commitment to safety, reliability, and service excellence, while proudly carrying our flag into the future." (Photo Airbus)

IndiGo launches Athens

INDIAN LOW-COST carrier IndiGo is pushing further into Europe with two new route announcements. The low-cost Indian airline confirmed that Athens will become the first destination served by India's inaugural Airbus A321XLR, due for delivery late 2025. Six weekly services from Delhi and Mumbai are planned from January 2026, making IndiGo the only Indian carrier to offer direct connections to Greece.

Pieter Elbers, IndiGo's chief executive officer, commented: "Athens as the inaugural destination for IndiGo's, and India's, first Airbus A321XLR is a symbolic milestone of India's aviation ascent. IndiGo is proud to be the only Indian airline, currently, to announce direct flights between India and Greece – two ancient civilisations with a history of long-standing relationship."

Alongside Athens, IndiGo has unveiled a new long-haul route linking Mumbai and the Danish capital, Copenhagen, from October 8, 2025. The thrice-weekly flights will be flown by a Boeing 787-9 leased from Norse Atlantic Airways, making Copenhagen IndiGo's 44th international and 138th overall destination. Elbers said there was "growing demand for travel between India and Northern Europe".

Qantas expands fleet

AUSTRALIAN FLAG carrier Qantas has become the first airline in the Asia-Pacific region to place the Airbus A321XLR into commercial service, with the type operating its inaugural flights on September 25 between Sydney-Melbourne and Sydney-Perth. The first two aircraft, *Great Ocean Road* – VH-OGA (c/n 12323) – and *Outback Way* – VH-OGB (c/n 12427) – are the first pair in a fleet that will eventually total 48. Configured to replace the Boeing 737 on domestic sectors, the A321XLR offers wider seats, larger windows, 60% more overhead bin space and complimentary high-speed Wi-Fi. Qantas' third A321XLR aircraft, *Seven Peaks Walk* – VH-OGC (c/n 12594) – is expected in November. By the end of the financial year, Qantas will have seven of the type.

Qantas Domestic CEO Markus Svensson said: "The extended flight range will also enable us to operate these aircraft on both domestic and short-haul international routes, including destinations across Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands that are not currently viable with our current narrowbody fleet."

The airline will also introduce the Airbus A220 to international operations for the first time early next year. From February 2026, the type will begin flying between Brisbane and Wellington, replacing Embraer 190 and some Boeing 737 services on the route. The aircraft, which seats 137 passengers, is around 25% more fuel efficient than the older models it replaces and will operate up to three times per week initially. (Photo Qantas)

QANTAS
VH-OGA

AirAsia eyes C919 order

MALAYSIAN MULTINATIONAL low-cost carrier AirAsia is in discussions with China's state-owned Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China (COMAC) over a possible purchase of the C919, the new single-aisle jet designed to rival the Boeing 737 and Airbus A320.

Tony Fernandes, chief executive of AirAsia parent company Capital A, confirmed the airline's interest during the recent Belt and Road Summit in Hong Kong. "We're in active discussions to buy the C919," he was quoted by the *South China Morning Post* as saying, adding: "We're the first foreign airline to be working with COMAC [on a C919 deal]."

The C919, which seats up to 192 passengers and has a maximum range of around 5,555km – versus the A320neo which can seat 194 and reach 6,300km – is already in service with Chinese carriers but has yet to secure a foreign customer without existing commercial or political links to China. Securing AirAsia, one of Asia's largest low-cost operators, would represent a major win for COMAC as it seeks to establish the aircraft outside its home market. Fernandes did not disclose details of the negotiations, including pricing or the potential size of any order. Elsewhere, Air Cambodia has finalised an order for ten COMAC C909 narrowbody aircraft and signed letters of intent for an additional ten, positioning itself to become the third overseas carrier to operate the Chinese-built regional jet. Air Cambodia's current fleet comprises just six aircraft – three ATR 72s, two A320-200s and a single Airbus A321-200. (Photo Nigel Pittaway)

Chinese airlines return to **India**

DIRECT FLIGHTS between China and India, which were suspended in early 2020 due to the pandemic, are gradually resuming as airlines from both countries seek to reconnect major cities in the world's two most populous nations.

Chinese carriers have applied for regulatory approvals and slots at key Indian airports for the upcoming winter schedule, while India has agreed to restore services. An updated Air Services Agreement between the two is due to be finalised soon.

Air China is expected to operate flights between Beijing and Delhi, while China Eastern plans services from Shanghai to Delhi, along with a new Kunming-Kolkata route. China Southern will link Guangzhou with Delhi, and Shandong Airlines is also preparing a Kunming-Delhi service.

On the Indian side, low-cost carrier IndiGo has announced flights connecting Delhi to Chengdu and Guangzhou. Prior to the pandemic, nine nonstop India-China routes carried approximately 1.25 million passengers annually. Traffic fell sharply during the pandemic, dropping to around 620,000 passengers travelling via indirect connections. Diplomatic tensions have delayed the resumption of services between the two countries.

Maiden E2 for Virgin

VIRGIN AUSTRALIA Regional Airlines (VARA) has taken delivery of its first Embraer E190-E2, following a 15,000-mile (25,000km) journey from Brazil to Perth. The aircraft, VH-E2A (c/n 19020185) named *Coral Bay*, is Embraer's 1,900th E-Jet delivered and will primarily serve Western Australia's charter market, while also supporting the airline's scheduled services.

The epic five-day ferry flight between São José dos Campos and Perth took in six stops at Willemstad/Curaçao, Brownsville/South Padre in Texas, Ontario in California, Kona/Ellison Onizuka in Hawaii, Nadi in Fiji, and Canberra.

Delivered from leasing company Azorra's firm orderbook with Embraer, another three aircraft will be handed over to to Virgin Australia later this year and through to 2026. Virgin Australia has a total of eight firm orders for E2 aircraft. The next-generation narrowbodies are 30% more fuel-efficient than the retiring Fokker 100s.

Nick Rohrlach, group executive, VARA, said: "We are incredibly excited by the introduction of the Embraer E190-E2s to the Virgin Australia Regional Airlines fleet. Replacing our Fokker 100s with these next-generation jets allows us to better connect resources industry clients and regional communities across Western Australia with improved reliability, significantly reduced noise, and lower emissions. These aircraft are perfectly designed for the challenging climates and environments we operate in, while offering our customers a spacious and comfortable in-flight experience." (Photo Embraer)

in brief

Air India and **Air Astana** have entered a codeshare agreement to expand connectivity between India and Kazakhstan. Under the pact, Air India will place its 'AI' code on Air Astana flights linking Almaty with Delhi and Mumbai. The move enhances connectivity through Almaty, a growing Central Asian aviation hub. The arrangement builds on an existing interline partnership between Air India and Air Astana that came into effect earlier in 2025, through which Air India customers already had access to connections via Almaty to multiple destinations across Central Asia and China.

China Southern Airlines is set to launch nonstop services between Guangzhou and Madrid this winter, marking its first entry into the Spanish market and further expanding the presence of Chinese carriers across Europe. From December 2, the SkyTeam member will operate three weekly flights linking Guangzhou/Baiyun with Madrid/Barajas, using Boeing 787-9 aircraft.

South Korean low-cost carrier **T'way Air** has unveiled plans to rebrand as **Trinity Airways** in the first half of 2026. The airline says the new identity reflects its ambition to create "new synergies" across aviation and hospitality, under the ownership of hotel and resort parent company Daemyung Sono Group. "Trinity, derived from the Latin word Trinitas, means 'three becoming one, achieving perfection'," the airline said, referring to the combination of air travel, hotels and resorts. T'way Air has ramped up its long-haul operation this year, operating daily Rome-Incheon and Frankfurt-Incheon flights over the summer.

Pakistan International Airlines halted its Lahore-Paris/Charles de Gaulle service from mid-September, barely eight weeks after the route's launch. The twice-weekly flights had begun on June 18, 2025, but weak passenger loads prompted the carrier to end the service. The airline stressed that the suspension was only temporary and was tied to a shift of resources towards the UK, where it hopes to relaunch services this autumn.

BBN Airlines Indonesia, part of Avia Solutions Group, has gained EASA Third-Country Operator (TCO) authorisation, allowing the Jakarta-based ACMI provider to operate flights into the EU. This will enable the airline to support European carriers with flexible wet-lease capacity. The carrier, part of Avia Solutions Group, operates six Boeing 737s with two more joining the fleet this autumn.

Delivery speed up, **777-9 slow down**

BOEING ACHIEVED its highest number of August deliveries since 2018, amassing a total of 385 aircraft for the first eight months of 2025, exceeding the 348 across the whole of 2024. The 57 aircraft handed over in August is its second-best monthly performance of the year, just below the 60 achieved in June. Deliveries included seven 737 MAX 8200s to Ryanair, American Airlines' 1,000th aircraft in the form of 787-9 Dreamliner, N849AN (c/n 66018), and the manufacturer's 300th 777F with the handover of A6-EFZ (c/n 68621), to Emirates. The Seattle-based airframer still lags behind its European competitor Airbus, which has delivered 433 aircraft during the same eight-month period.

Elsewhere, deliveries of the 777-9 are likely to be pushed back further as Boeing faces a "mountain" of uncompleted certification work, according to chief executive Kelly Ortberg. Speaking during a Morgan Stanley investor conference on September 11, he said the manufacturer is "falling behind" in its efforts to bring the new jet through Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approval. The programme was most recently delayed between August 2024 and January 2025 after problems with engine thrust links were discovered. There are five aircraft involved in the test programme, which have logged more than 1,500 flights so far, as Ortberg noted: "We're clearly behind our plan in getting the certification done. We're flying a lot of sorties and there are no new technical issues on the airplane or the engine."

Boeing still expects the first aircraft to enter service in 2026 and has a total of 565 orders comprising 43 777-8s, 463 777-9s, and 59 777-8Fs. (Photo Boeing)

US authorities push for airport drone protection

US AUTHORITIES are working on a bill that would require the FAA to deploy technologies to protect the country's airports from malicious drone attacks. The House Transportation Committee approved the bill on September 3, which would authorise the use of various methods to detect and identify drones, and have the power to control them remotely.

Drone incidents have been increasing, with the FAA reporting over 100 drone operations near airports every month. Several commercial aircraft have struck drones in recent years. The US government is making a broader push to protect critical infrastructure, including airports and large public venues, from attack or disruption by "unmanned aircraft systems" (UAS). Work is ongoing to create technologies known as "counter-UAS" systems to identify and protect against such a threat.

The FAA has also begun accepting proposals from firms that are willing to manage its multi-billion-dollar modernisation plans for US ATC systems. The modernisation of the dated and often overstretched ATC operation has been pushed by US President Donald Trump after the midair collision of an American Eagle Bombardier CRJ700 and a US Army helicopter over the Potomac River in Washington DC, in January. The FAA has said that whoever wins the contract will be required to make "transformational" changes across the country's airspace system within three-and-a-half years. (Photo The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey)

Boeing Deliveries

Guangzhou/Baiyun-based China Southern Airlines accepted delivery of Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, B227L (c/n 67813), on August 29, pictured here at Everett prior to the handover. The aircraft is one of 21 in the fleet, which also includes ten of the smaller -8 variant, and is configured with 28 business and 269 economy seats
AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/DIPANKAR BHAKTA

Boeing delivered the following aircraft in August:

737 MAX	42	AerCap (3); Air China (3); Air Lease Corporation; Allegiant Air; American Airlines; Aviation Capital Group; CDB Leasing (4); China Eastern Airlines; China Southern Airlines (2); Copa Airlines (2); Ethiopian Airlines; flydubai (2); Phoenix Aviation Capital; Ryanair (7); Singapore Airlines; Southwest Airlines (3); United Airlines (6); Virgin Australia; WestJet
777F	4	Aerotranscargo (FZE); CES Leasing Corporation; Emirates; Silk Way West Airlines
787-9	8	American Airlines (3); China Eastern Airlines; China Southern Airlines; EVA Air; Lufthansa; United Airlines
787-10	1	Air France-KLM
Total	55	
Annual total to date	373	

Safety violation fines for **Boeing**

THE FEDERAL Aviation Administration (FAA) has proposed fining Boeing $3,139,139 for various safety violations, including those related to the January 2024 in-flight blowout of the Alaska Airlines Boeing 737 MAX 9 mid-cabin door plug. The agency said the fine is the maximum allowed under US law and covers the period from September 2023 through to February 2024.

In a statement, the FAA said it had: "Identified hundreds of quality system violations at Boeing's 737 factory in Renton, Washington, and Boeing subcontractor Spirit AeroSystems' 737 factory in Wichita, Kansas. Additionally, Boeing presented two unairworthy aircraft to the FAA for airworthiness certificates and failed to follow its quality system."

The fine also includes actions relating to interference with Boeing's internal Organisation Designation Authorisation (ODA) team, the FAA-approved group that performs some certification, testing and inspection work on behalf of the regulator. The FAA found that: "A non-ODA Boeing employee pressured a Boeing ODA unit member to sign off on a Boeing 737 MAX airplane so Boeing could meet its delivery schedule, even though the ODA member determined the aircraft did not comply with applicable standards."

In response, Boeing said: "We regret the January 2024 door-plug accident and continue to work on strengthening our safety culture and improving first-time quality and accountability across our operations. Last year, under the oversight of the FAA, we instituted a safety and quality plan with key performance indicators to enhance safety management and quality assurance in airplane production. Our team continues to implement these improvements."

Embraer wins big, again

EMBRAER HAS continued to expand its E2 order book, this time after reaching an agreement with LATAM Airlines Group for 50 E195-E2s, with options for a further 24. Deliveries are due to commence in the second half of 2026, initially to LATAM Airlines Brasil, and potentially later to other group affiliates. The latest deal follows hot on the heels of other significant orders in recent months, namely 45 E195-E2s from SAS Scandinavian Airlines in July, and 50 of the same variant from Avelo in September.

Francisco Gomes Neto, president and CEO of Embraer, said: "This strategic partnership with the LATAM group reflects the airline's requirement for the most efficient and best-suited aircraft to complement its fleet and support its next chapter of growth in South America. The E195-E2 will allow LATAM affiliates to connect more destinations with the right capacity, while offering passengers superior comfort. We are extremely proud that the LATAM group has made the best choice to advance the region's connectivity, and for the future, we will build together."

The São Paulo-based manufacturer says the aircraft "combines competitive seat costs, superior fuel efficiency, and enhanced passenger comfort thanks to its 2-2 cabin configuration. Powered by Pratt & Whitney GTF engines and featuring advanced aerodynamics with the latest fly-by-wire technology, [it] delivers up to 30% lower fuel consumption per seat compared to previous-generation models." (Photo Embraer)

Maeve aims to **fly high**

MAEVE AEROSPACE is partnering with Delta Air Lines to advance development of its hybrid electric aircraft for regional flights. The Delft-based airframer says that in comparison to existing regional aircraft designs, its aircraft "is designed to reduce fuel consumption and emissions by up to 40% using conventional jet fuel, with further lifecycle emissions reductions possible when using sustainable aviation fuel (SAF)."

Delta is lending operational expertise to support the development of the "hybrid-electric engine architecture that provides power assistance at low altitude operations. This enables an optimisation of the powerplant and the wing for lower fuel consumption. The hybrid model can also support the efficient integration of more electric aircraft systems."

Martin Nüesseler, Maeve's chief technology officer, added: "It's a privilege to have Delta as a partner in the development of groundbreaking technologies and processes."

The Dutch manufacturer has also entered into a strategic investment agreement with SkyWest Airlines, which will include exclusive launch rights for the airline. SkyWest has a fleet of almost 500 aircraft, operating through partnerships with United Airlines, Delta Air Lines, American Airlines and Alaska Airlines. Nüesseler added: "This investment, made by the largest regional airline in the world, not only validates our vision but also establishes a partnership that supports the development of the [aircraft] by providing important input from an operator to generate a real impact in the market and for more sustainable air travel." (Photo Delta Air Lines)

Vertical transitions to **horizontal**

VERTICAL AEROSPACE claims it has a clear path to a 2028 certification for its VX4 aircraft, at a cost of less than $700m. As part of its Flightpath 2030 programme, the Bristol-based eVTOL maker is expanding its Cotswold Airport facility to 100,000sq ft, which it says will create capacity to build more than 25 airframes each year. Its Avonmouth base is also being expanded and will allow battery production to be tripled.

After the successful completion of its phase three piloted wingborne test, the full-scale aircraft has now taken off, flown, and landed like a conventional aircraft with wing-generated lift. The manufacturer said it "performed as modelled in the simulator, validating both the design and ease of handling", switching between direct (manual) and flight (computer-assisted) control modes.

Stuart Simpson, CEO of Vertical Aerospace: "Completing wingborne flight is a historic milestone; each phase strengthens confidence among regulators, partners, and investors that our aircraft will meet the highest standards of safety and performance. Now we enter the most exciting stage: transition testing, demonstrating the mode the VX4 will use in passenger service."

Vertical says it is on track to complete transition testing, the ability to shift seamlessly between vertical lift (helicopter mode) and wingborne flight (aircraft mode) by the end of 2025. It said: "This 20-second piloted manoeuvre is the defining capability of tiltrotor eVTOLs, enabling operations from rooftops, vertiports and heliports. Completion will mark a major technical unlock, a key de-risking milestone on the path to certification and revenue generation."

Hybrid-electric flight testing will follow in 2026. Simpson added: "We now have a clear, efficient path to certification and commercialisation at scale, positioning Vertical to lead the next era of electric flight." (Photo Vertical Aerospace)

Airbus Deliveries

Ethiopian Airlines accepted delivery of Airbus A350-1041, ET-BAZ (c/n 723), on August 1, after a ferry flight from Toulouse to Addis Ababa via Djibouti. The Rolls-Royce-powered, two-class aircraft offering 46 business and 349 economy seats, is one of four in the fleet, which also includes 20 of the smaller -900 variant
AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/OLIVIERG

Airbus delivered the following aircraft in August:

A220-300	7	Delta Air Lines; Air France; Breeze Airways; Air Lease Corporation [ITA Airways]; JetBlue Airways; Air Canada; Azorra [Croatia Airlines]
A319neo	3	Private Customer [K5-Aviation]; West Air; Air China
A320neo	12	SMBC Aviation Capital [Royal Jordanian] (2); Macquarie AirFinance Holdings [SAS]; Scoot; Avolon [Royal Jordanian]; China Southern Airlines (2); flynas; Avolon [FlyArystan]; CALC [LATAM]; Transavia; Peach
A321neo	32	Pegasus Airlines (2); Wizz Air (3); Air Lease Corporation [American Airlines] (2); China Eastern Airlines; IndiGo (4); CMB Financial Leasing [Hainan Airlines]; Transavia; United Airlines (2); CDB Leasing [China Southern Airlines] (2); Delta Air Lines (2); Air China; KLM Royal Dutch Airlines; Qantas Airways; United Airlines; American Airlines; BOCOM Leasing [Turkish Airlines]; AerCap [Etihad Airways]; CALC [United Airlines]; Kuwait Airways; AerCap [Air Macau]; SMBC Aviation Capital [Salam Air]; TAP Air Portugal
A330-900	2	CIT Leasing [Malaysia Airlines]; Avolon [Malaysia Airlines]
A350-900	2	Japan Airlines; Emirates
A350-1000	3	Ethiopian Airlines; Qatar Airways; Etihad Airways
Total	61	
Annual total to date	433	

Green light for **Gatwick's second runway**

PLANS FOR a second runway at London/Gatwick have been approved by the UK's transport secretary, Heidi Alexander, marking a significant expansion for the country's second-busiest aviation hub. The £2.2bn privately-funded project will enable the airport to increase its annual passenger capacity to 80 million and add another 100,000 flights per year.

The airport's main shareholder, VINCI Airports, said that the expansion would create around 14,000 jobs, boosting trade and tourism.

Despite being Europe's busiest single-runway airport, Gatwick actually has two runways. However, it only uses its main 08R/26L, with the shorter parallel northern runway used mainly as a taxiway or as a runway if the main one is undergoing maintenance. To allow both runways to be used simultaneously without restrictions, the centre line of 08L/26R will need to be moved 12m to the north.

To accommodate the increased number of passengers, other work includes the upgrading of infrastructure, including taxiways, new terminals and other on-site facilities.

The planning inspectorate rejected Gatwick's initial plans due to concerns over its provisions for noise prevention and public transport connections. A revised plan was later published, which has now been approved by the government.

Stewart Wingate, managing director of VINCI Airports for the UK, said that the operator welcomed the government's approval, which came ahead of the expected deadline. "As we've said previously, it is essential that any planning conditions enable us to realise the full benefits of the project and do not impose unnecessary constraints that make it uneconomic to invest in. We now need to carefully examine the details of the planning consent," he added. (Photo Gatwick Airport)

Belfast City launches master plan

BELFAST CITY airport has launched its draft master plan, which will take the facility to 2040. The plan contains proposals to expand its footprint with an extended terminal and airfield facilities. It also includes improved surface access as well as the potential for Ireland's first air-rail link.

In a statement, the airport said that the upgrade "has the potential to unlock up to £200m in private investment, support thousands of new jobs and deliver a £1.7bn injection into the Northern Ireland economy annually". The airport's workforce could also double to more than 2,200 staff members, as well as facilitating the development of its apprenticeship schemes.

Belfast City Airport chief executive, Matthew Hall, said: "Delivery of our Master Plan is a once-in-a-generation opportunity that will benefit passengers and businesses across the region, while delivering key elements of the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government.

"Every airport on the island of Ireland will need to play its part in meeting future demand, and this draft Master Plan exemplifies Belfast City Airport's commitment to doing so, while reinforcing our position as a vital economic enabler for the region."

BELFAST CITY AIRPORT

Aviation analysts have said that the demand for air travel across Ireland will double to 90 million passengers annually by 2040. If this is the case, then Belfast/City will need to grow to seven million passengers over the same period to retain and expand its connectivity across the UK and to Europe. (Photo Belfast City Airport)

Bournemouth Airport workers plan strike action

AIRPORT WORKERS at Bournemouth Airport are set to strike in a dispute over pay. A strike was set to take place in September but was called off to allow workers to be balloted on a deal. However, this was later rejected, and so around 80 Unite union members who work in baggage handling, check-in, flight dispatch and fuelling were (at the time of going to press) set to walk out over four days, September 30 and October 1, 16 and 17.

In a statement, the airport said: "We are extremely disappointed industrial action has been threatened despite the airport having negotiated extensively and in good faith with Unite and having met all their previous demands in full. This included making significantly improved pay offers to staff in line with requests, which Unite recommended to their members for approval.

"We will continue to seek to reach an agreement with Unite without the need for industrial action. At the same time, preparations are underway on contingency plans to minimise disruption and allow the airport to operate as normal on these dates."

Unite claims that the airport is "successful and profitable" after recently increasing all its charges by 5%. It is also investing over £50m in expansion projects as passenger numbers grow. Unite general secretary Sharon Graham said: "It is completely unacceptable that people working for a profitable employer are struggling to afford the basics. Bournemouth Airport's success comes from its hardworking staff. It can fully afford to reward them by coming back with a fair offer. Unite members will have the full backing of the union during this industrial action."

BournemouthAirport
Part of Regional & City Airports
Departures

Bournemouth currently serves over 950,000 passengers annually, with flights to 34 destinations across Europe and North Africa. Ryanair, the airport's biggest operator, said that it plans to operate "as normal" during the industrial action. (Photo Bournemouth Airport)

Sky View

Insights and opinions on the industry's hottest topics

By Jonathan Hinkles, 30-year UK airline executive

The 42nd Triennial Assembly of ICAO is scheduled to take place in late September. ICAO is an offshoot of the United Nations, formed in 1944 to govern the rules of the air and establish common global standards for aviation. If this sounds rather dull but eminently worthy, it's because it is. ICAO's work is rarely at the cutting edge of industry developments; its conference sessions are unlikely to inspire a Netflix box-set any time soon.

Yet there's a frisson of anticipation around this year's gathering in Montreal. The thorny subject of pilot retirement ages is up for debate, with proposals tabled to increase the mandatory retirement age from 65 to 67.

In the blue corner is the USA, where unions are fighting tooth and nail against the proposals for reasons that, in my view, are as hazy as they are self-serving. In the red corner are progressive countries like Canada, Australia, and Japan, which have already licensed pilots to fly commercially beyond 65 within their national borders, a move they are able to make without ICAO's global concurrence.

On the sidelines are the UK and others, for ICAO counts 193 of the world's 195 states amongst its members. When the decision depends on votes from Tonga, Tuvalu and Eswatini (no offence intended to any!), it's anyone's guess as to how the vote could go. If I had a vote, it would be firmly in favour of making the change.

Beyond all else, the UK's national retirement age is moving from 65 to 67: I think it's unfair and discriminatory for pilots to be forced to retire before they can join the rest of us in drawing a state pension. Even so, unions in the USA are fighting the change because it will increase the pool of employable pilots and perhaps alleviate the tension which has enabled them to drive huge salary increases in the last few years. Tellingly, some of the most vocal proponents of the change are US airline pilots approaching the current hard stop at 65.

There's a clear precedent for this move. Until 2005, ICAO rules precluded pilots over 60 from flying in command of a commercial aircraft with a take-off weight of over 20 tonnes. Since that change, aviation has become safer still, largely through automation and advances in medical technology, which detect health issues at a much earlier stage. The world isn't littered with aircraft hull losses, as today's opposition from US pilot unions would have you believe.

Of course, there's nothing in the legislation which forces pilots to keep working until 67. Like the rest of us, any pilot can choose to retire early. Just as importantly, pilots could elect to step down from long-haul flying and its associated jet lag to continue flying in a short-haul or regional arena, where their tremendous experience brings real benefits.

In a nutshell, that's the reason why I support the change so strongly. In my first job at CityFlyer Express, the pre-2005 ICAO 20-tonne rule was still in force. Alongside our younger pilots in the first officer's seat, we all gained much from the incredible experience of the captains flying Shorts 360s and ATR turboprops.

Captains from British Caledonian 747s, Laker DC-10s, Dan-Air 727s, East African VC10s and beyond all joined us at 60 to fly for a further five years. None took themselves too seriously. Everyone immediately recalls the eternally irreverent "Stack" Butterley, who flew Concorde for British Airways before joining us at CityFlyer to fly ATRs. I loved working with Shorts 360 Captain Peter Brown, who had flown Zambia Airways' only DC-10. His stories come to mind whenever I see the flight deck of that aircraft in the viewing park at Manchester Airport in Monarch livery.

Whether flamboyant or unassuming, each oozed knowledge and decision-making capacity from which we all learned much. I'm not a pilot, but even I gained hugely from working alongside these characters when out on charter missions, dispatching on the ramp, or sitting on the flight deck jump seat. Their experience has been incredibly valuable to me; I know that our former first officers, most of whom are now captains with BA, Virgin, TUI, and others, feel the same way. A colleague who billed it as the "University of Aviation" wasn't far wrong.

If this month's decision by ICAO favours an increase in retirement age to 67, I'm all for helping to retain this valuable experience from which the rest of us can learn and progress. It will restore a path for pilots transitioning from long-haul to regional and commuter operations, imparting wisdom to the next generation of captains-in-waiting with whom they fly.

Aviation will be a far better place for it. I just hope the ICAO representatives of Tonga, Tuvalu and Eswatini will see it the same way, and cast their votes in favour. AW

> If this month's decision by ICAO favours an increase in retirement age to 67, I'm all for helping to retain this valuable experience from which the rest of us can learn and progress

Do the right

BELOW: ***Air Do Boeing 767-33AER, JA01HD (c/n 28159), which operated for the airline from 2000-2021, takes off from Sapporo*** AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/EDWIN CHAI

Somewhere towards the quieter end of branding and global presence is an airline that roams Japanese skies and goes by the name Air Do. As ambiguously as this airline presents itself, behind the curious identity is a dedicated operator with its heart and soul headquartered in northern Japan, in the city of Sapporo on the island of Hokkaido.

Up until 1996, when the Japanese airline deregulation act came into force, the big three – All Nippon Airways (ANA), Japan Airlines (JAL) and Japan Air System (JAS) – had the ability to control the market and pricing. Soon after, the land of the rising sun shone the spotlight on a pair of new entrants to the market, Hokkaido International Airlines (HIA) and Skymark Airlines, both as a consequence of deregulation.

Teruo Hamada, was a local farmer from Hokkaido, who teamed up with more than 20 like-minded local investors to finance the creation of HIA. Founded on November 14, 1996, it was Japan's second low-cost carrier, two days after the inception of Skymark. In its early days, maintenance and ground services were subcontracted to JAL.

The carrier – which would later be renamed Air Do – took to the skies for the first time on December 20, 1998. The early fleet comprised two all-economy, 286-seat Boeing 767-300s, JA98AD (c/n 27476) and JA01HD (c/n 28159), which operated the

thing

Siddharth Ganesh sketches out the history of Air Do, the small, vibrant, Japanese airline operating flights from Hokkaido to Honshu and Kyushu

AIR DO
JA01HD

Sapporo/New Chitose-Tokyo/Haneda route in competition with established full-service airlines. Air Do's offering proved appealing to the people of Hokkaido as it brought more affordable fares to the region.

The impact of the airline on the domestic aviation market was immediate. Within months of launching it was experiencing load factors of 80%, which was higher than had been anticipated. Fares were generally 50-60% lower than legacy carriers on the same route. Along with Skymark, the low-cost effect was even felt on the Shinkansen (bullet train), seizing nearly 10% of rail travel demand on comparable routes. As the first new Japanese airlines in more than 30 years, the newbies also created a feeling of curiosity.

As time went by, the 'big three' took measures to compete and reduced their ticket prices accordingly. As a result, Air Do's load factors tumbled as the millennium turned. The Hokkaido prefectural government injected capital to boost the airline, but in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, passengers stayed away and the government refused to invest more funds. The airline entered bankruptcy restructuring in June 2002 and, the following year, it entered into a strategic partnership with ANA that would help shape its future. Air Do handed ANA some of its Haneda-Saporro slots and, in return, it gained domestic routes to Asahikawa and Hakodate.

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ABOVE: ***Air Do Boeing 737-781, JA07AN (c/n 33900), has been with the airline since November 2013, and is seen here departing Sapporo/New Chitose*** ALL IMAGES AIR DO UNLESS STATED

Air Do's current fleet				
Registration	**Aircraft**	**C/n**	**First flight**	**Arrived**
JA07AN	Boeing 737-781	33900	09/2006	15/11/2013
JA08AN	Boeing 737-781	33877	10/2006	10/03/2014
JA09AN	Boeing 737-781	33878	11/2006	18/09/2015
JA11AN	Boeing 737-781	33882	05/2007	04/01/2013
JA12AN	Boeing 737-781	33881	06/2007	20/10/2014
JA14AN	Boeing 737-781	33883	08/2007	22/01/2016
JA15AN	Boeing 737-781	33888	09/2007	19/06/2013
JA16AN	Boeing 737-781	33889	01/2008	18/12/2015
JA605A	Boeing 767-381ER	32974	07/2002	22/10/2021
JA607A	Boeing 767-381ER	32976	07/2002	05/11/2021
JA612A	Boeing 767-381ER	33506	02/2004	17/08/2019
JA613A	Boeing 767-381ER	33507	07/2004	18/03/2019

Japanese aviation experienced an intense period with further alliances, partnerships and market consolidation, culminating in the merger of JAL and JAS in October 2002. That move laid the foundation of what was to come in the following years, a duopoly in Japanese skies comprising ANA and JAL.

Network operations

The network of Air Do relies on the basic premise of connecting the island of Hokkaido with Honshu, the main and largest island in Japan and home to its capital city, Tokyo. Flights originating from Tokyo/Haneda serve several destinations across Hokkaido: Asahikawa, Hakodate, Kushiro, Memanbetsu, Obihiro and Sapporo/New Chitose. Flights from Hokkaido to the mainland operate from Sapporo/New Chitose to Chubu/Centrair, Fukuoka, Kobe, Sendai and Tokyo/Haneda, with the sole exception being the service from Hakodate-Chubu/Centrair.

As a result, the airline offers limited connections at its two hubs and primarily focuses on point-to-point operations.

In 2022, the airline considered operating international flights to neighbouring countries such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, northeast China and the far east of Russia, to drive tourism into Hokkaido. But this plan appears to have fallen by the wayside as a spokesperson for the airline confirmed: "At this moment, we don't have any plans for international flights."

Post-COVID-19, Air Do gradually recovered demand for leisure and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) flights, but restoring business passenger numbers proved a harder challenge. Across the whole of 2023 the load factor was 80.2% on 23,712 flights, and between April 1 and September 30, 2024, it operated 11,892 flights with a load factor of 81.5%. It managed to produce a net profit of £17m for the first half of 2024 based on an operating revenue of £258m. A spokesperson commented: "As for load factor, [the] Haneda-Hakodate route was most busy during the period and its load factor was 88.2%. As for the revenues, the trunk route [from] Haneda-Chitose was the most important for us and its load factor was 80.3%."

Busy, busy, busy

The original offering and current backbone of the network is still the Sapporo/New Chitose-Tokyo/Haneda connection, which has been among the world's top five busiest routes for several years, usually ranked second

> "Behind the curious identity is a dedicated operator with its heart and soul headquartered in northern Japan"

BELOW: ***The airline currently operates four 767s with an average age of around 22 years***

HAKODATE AIRPORT
AIR DO

ABOVE: ***Air Do has been a fixture at Hakodate Airport since 2003, operating services to Tokyo/Haneda and Chubu/Centrair***

to Seoul/Gimpo-Jeju in South Korea. According to OAG data for 2024, a whopping 11.9 million seats were available, averaging 32,602 per day. To maximise revenue, Air Do deploys all-economy Boeing 767-300ERs on the route nine times a day, with another three daily services operated by one of its all-economy 737-700s. The overall capacity offered by the airline is just over 2.2 million seats annually, implying a market share of just under 20% in this bustling sector.

Competition on the route is intense, with ANA and JAL each operating more than 15 daily flights, mostly on widebody jets such as the 777, 787 and the Airbus A350. Other domestic players include Spring Japan, Skymark, Peach and Jetstar Japan, all using narrowbodies. Such is the route's popularity, most airlines offer the option of an open day ticket, similar to train operators.

With a stable network and the long-established Tokyo-Sapporo corridor, Air Do competes with other low-cost carriers offering a broader network across Japan. The airline's spokesperson stated: "The Japanese market is in a situation of low unit prices due to excessive competition. Our challenges are to differentiate ourselves from competitors and increase our unit prices."

Fleet focus

The airline operates an all-economy Boeing fleet comprising eight 737-700s seating 144 passengers, and four 767-300ERs offering 288 seats. The complete fleet at one time or another previously flew for ANA and came to Air Do via its partnership with the legacy carrier. One particular 767-300ER, JA607A (c/n 32976), carries a special 'Pokémon Rokon Jet' livery that features different designs on the fuselage.

The fleet is ageing, with an average age of 19.8 years, so a renewal of sorts will be due sooner rather than later. Previously, the airline had mentioned the 737 MAX and 787 as having suitable capacity characteristics, although the spokesperson was more non-committal: "We think we should provide the amount of seats corresponding to the demand on each route."

Success factors

A stunted late mid-life fleet and intense competition might make one wonder how Air Do manages to stay afloat. The answer is quite straightforward: slots and codeshares.

Its golden asset is the prime slots at Tokyo/Haneda, the larger and busier of the two airports that serve the 14 million people that live in the city. Haneda is the more prominent of the two due to its location, ten miles south of the city centre, wedged into Tokyo Bay and offering fast, convenient access for travellers. On the other hand, Narita is 40 miles east of the city in Chiba district. In simple terms, Haneda's slots have

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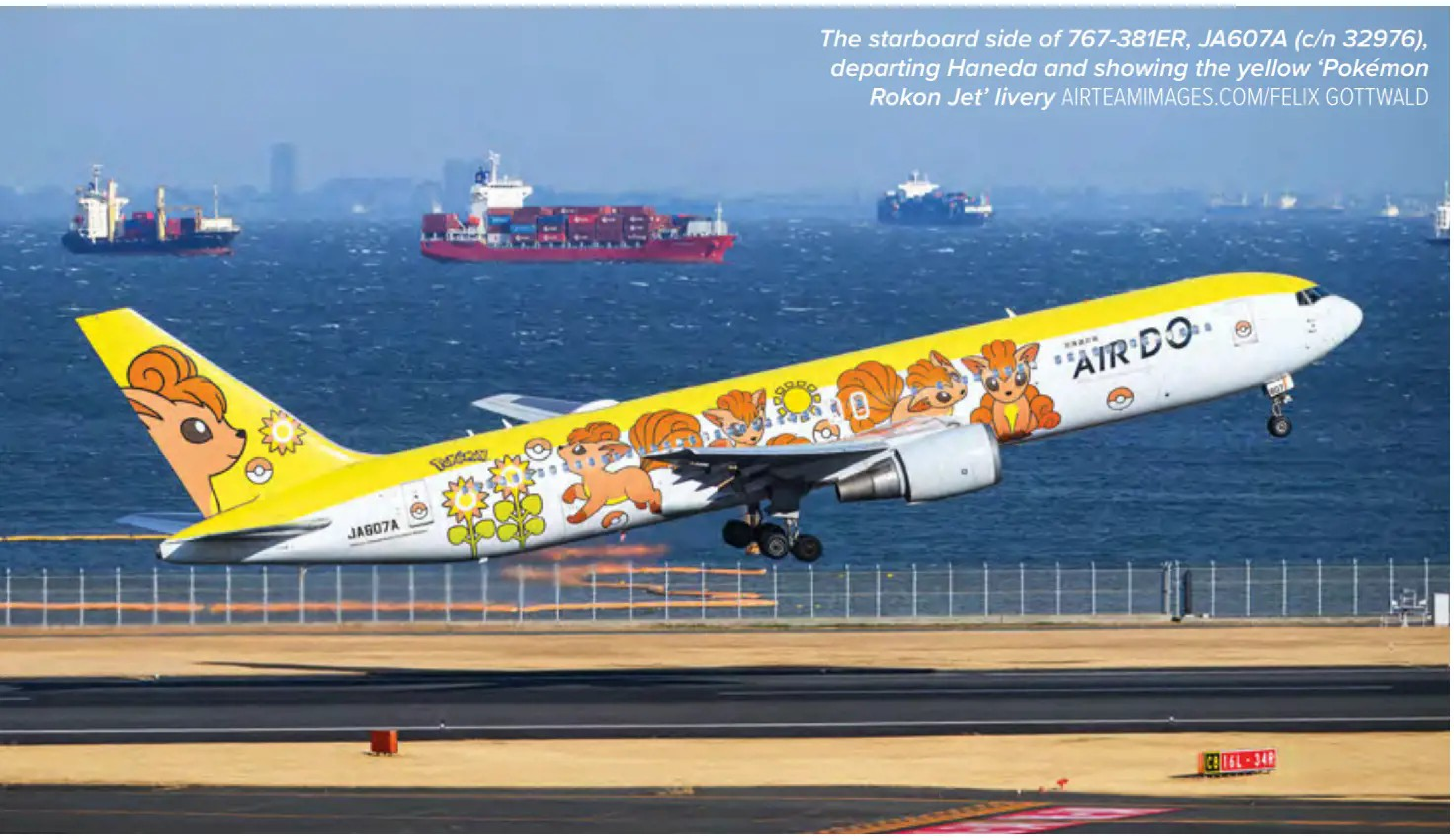
BELOW: ***Boeing 737-54K, JA8504 (c/n 27432), was with the airline from 2008-2015 and is seen here with Hokkaido International Airlines titles and a previous livery*** AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/EDWIN CHAI

As with the rest of its current fleet, 767-381ER, JA613A (c/n 33507), came to the airline thanks to its relationship with All Nippon Airways

A 737 and 767 in perfect symmetry at Sapporo AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/THOMAS.K



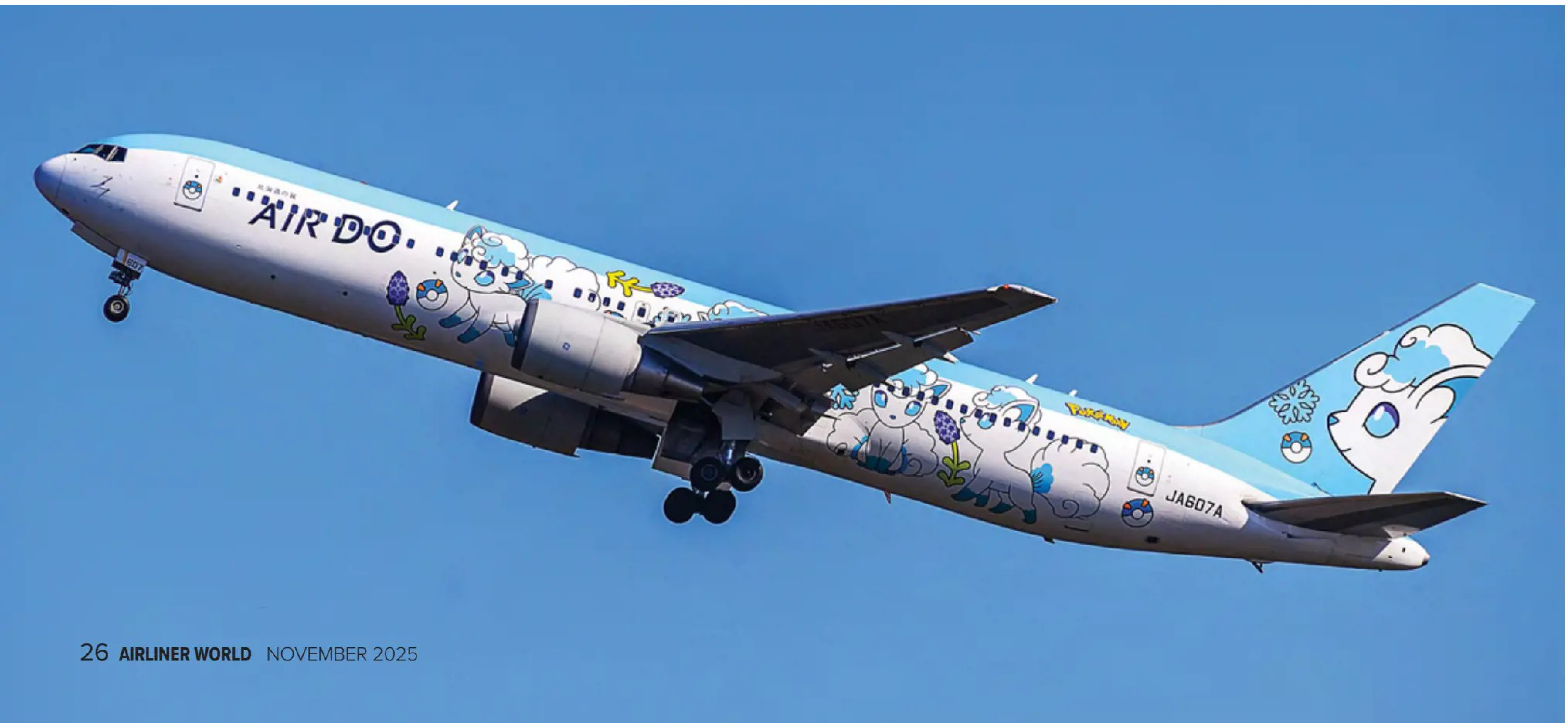
The starboard side of 767-381ER, JA607A (c/n 32976), departing Haneda and showing the yellow 'Pokémon Rokon Jet' livery AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/FELIX GOTTWALD

become severely constrained, which is why most international flights now arrive at Narita. Air Do and Skymark are the only low-cost carriers based at Haneda thanks to the grandfather rights to slots each acquired before the airport became slot-constrained. It is common to see higher fares offered by Air Do and Skymark, both leveraging the more convenient airport to city access as a premium selling point.

> "The impact of the airline on the domestic aviation market was immediate"

Codeshares with ANA have further strengthened the standing of Air Do at Haneda, leaning on the legacy carrier's strong domestic and international presence at the hub. Although Air Do doesn't focus on connecting flights, ANA passengers at Haneda do transfer to its network because of the codeshare arrangement between the two.

In October 2022, in a cost-cutting measure, a new holding company called Regional Plus Wings was established. It brought Air Do and Solaseed Air, another Japanese airline based at Haneda, under the same umbrella. Air Do's spokesperson said: "I would like to stress that this is not a merger between Air Do and Solaseed Air, but a management integration. Air Do and Solaseed Air still exist as legal airline personalities with original company names and brands. Thanks



BELOW: ***The port side of JA607A displaying the blue 'Pokémon Rokon Jet' livery*** AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/WOCO

ABOVE: ***Hokkaido is the northernmost of the four main islands of Japan and a tourist hotspot for winter sports***

ABOVE: ***The all-economy cabin features two-tone blue and white seating***

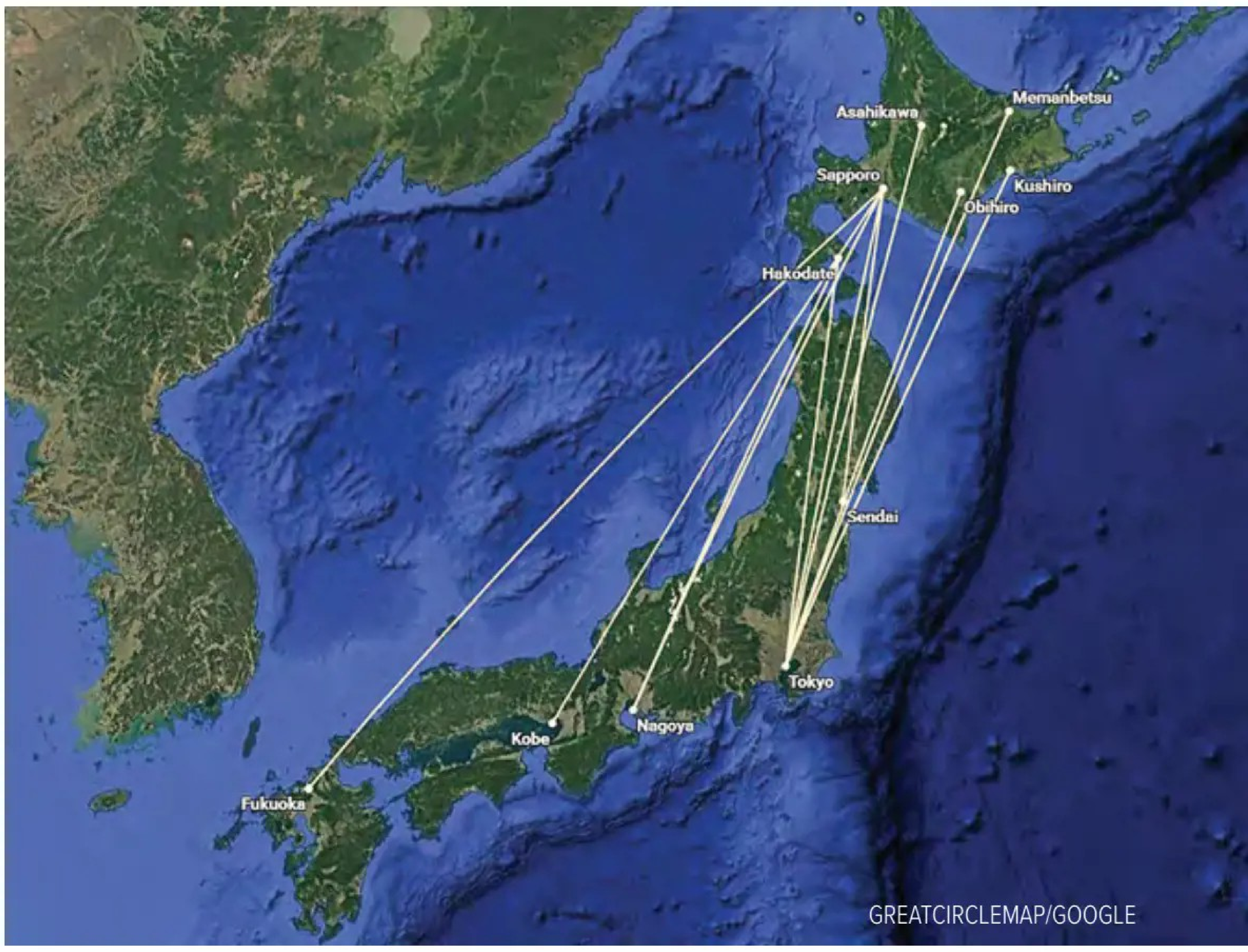
to the management integration, for example, we can enjoy cost reduction from facility integration."

Solaseed is focused on southern Japan, primarily connecting to Kyushu island, but also offering a service to Naha on the island of Okinawa. Its fleet of 14 737-800s mean the holding company has a total of 26 jets on its books. Despite the integration, both airlines continue to manage their own networks, schedules, sales and aircraft procurement.

Hokkaido at heart

Air Do's home island, Hokkaido, is the northernmost of the four main islands of Japan and a renowned tourist hotspot offering a variety of outdoor activities such as skiing and trekking, hot springs and the unique culture of the indigenous Ainu people. It is characterised by a cool climate, with mountains and volcanoes running along a central north-south spine. Sapporo, the largest city on the island, is the primary gateway, served by New Chitose Airport which handled more than 24 million passengers in 2024. Major airlines like Air China, Cathay Pacific, China Eastern Airlines, Korean Air, Qantas, Singapore Airlines and Thai Airways fly directly to Sapporo.

> "The original offering and current backbone of the network is still the Sapporo/ New Chitose-Tokyo/ Haneda connection"



GREATCIRCLEMAP/GOOGLE

For Air Do, part of its mission onboard is to deliver a feeling of home to its guests. The spokesperson explained: "We deliver a Hokkaido culture and experience to the passengers through our inflight services, including beverages and items that are Hokkaido products." For example, complimentary drinks are served to all passengers, ranging from blended coffee, scallop soup and barley tea – all Hokkaido-inspired flavours.

As a tail note, the spokesperson noted: "Air Do is a regional-oriented airline that was founded with the purpose of contributing to the development of Hokkaido. 'Do' has two meanings: as a verb and as a literal part of Hokkaido. We continue to improve our characteristic and Hokkaido-specific services with the objective of increasing recognition of and demand for products made in Hokkaido." AW

BELOW: ***Air Do 767-381, JA602A (c/n 27944), carried the 'Beardo Hokkaido Jet' livery from 2016 until it was withdrawn from use in December 2021*** AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/ EDWIN CHAI

AIR DO
JA602A

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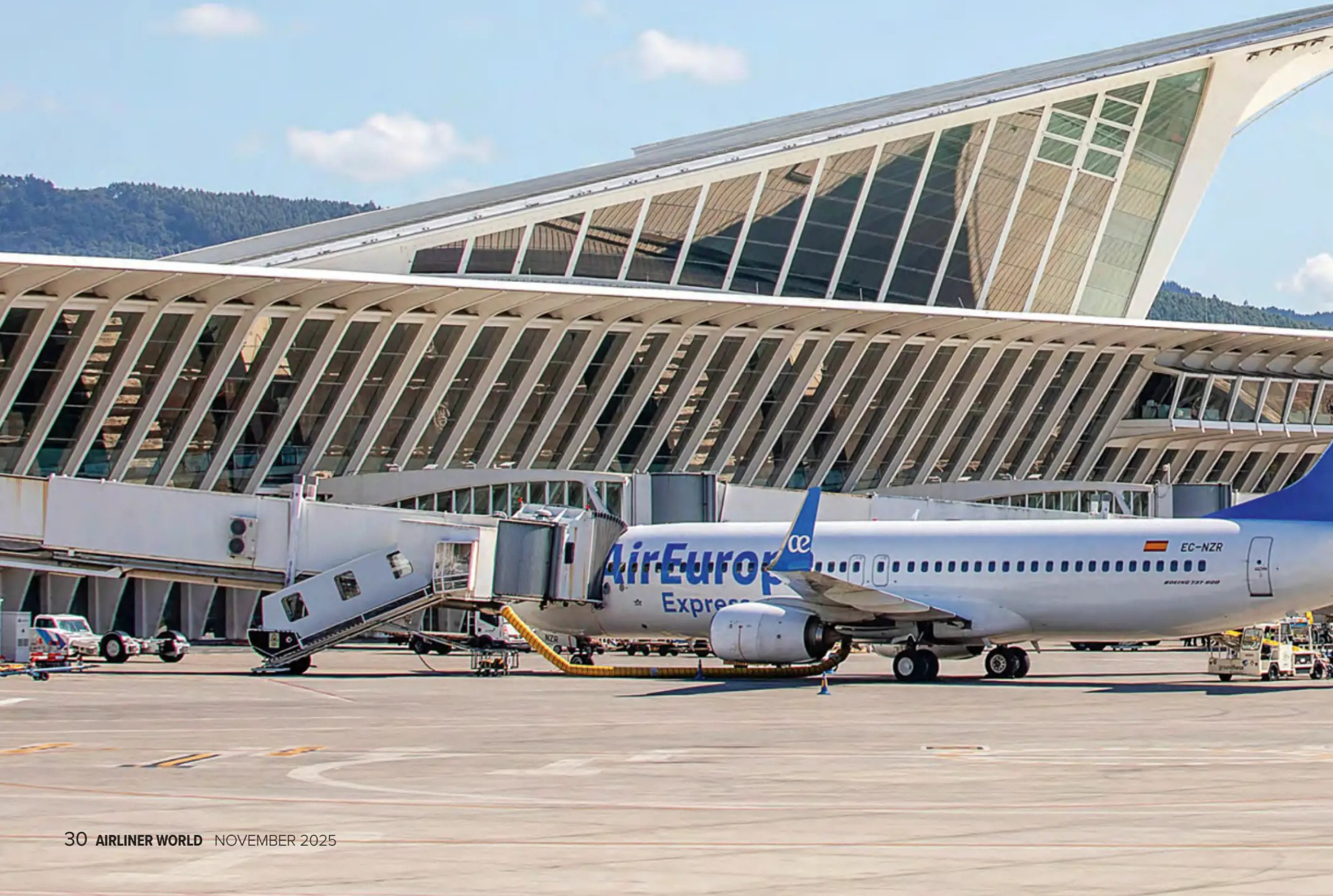
La paloma blanca

As Bilbao's emblematic terminal turns 25, **Robert Veitch** looks back at the life and times of Santiago Calatrava's white dove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In October 1927, when the decision to build Bilbao's airport was taken, the mountainous Basque Country posed problems in the search for a site, and it took almost a decade to find somewhere suitable. Think of Spain and a warm, sunny climate is likely to spring to mind, but that's not the case in this region. Located in close proximity to the Cantabrian Mountains, the Pyrenees and Bay of Biscay, it is one of the wetter and windier parts of the country. The chosen location, Sondika, lay five miles due north of the city centre and constituted a northwest-southwest plain between parallel ranges of hills.

The Spanish Department of Aeronautics granted permission to build in 1936 and construction began almost immediately with a military airfield opening in June the following year, during the Spanish Civil War. A second phase of development began in 1938, which evolved into the construction of a civilian facility in 1940. It would take until September 19, 1948, for the first commercial flight to depart – a Bristol 170 to Madrid, operated by Aviaco having the honour of being number one on the runway.

The airport had a 4,724ft-long asphalt primary runway 11/29 and a secondary unmade strip measuring 4,921ft. A terminal building, named in honour of Carlos Haya – a local republican pilot who died in a blue-on-blue air crash in 1938 – was constructed to the south of 11/29 and opened in 1950. Further improvements included taxiways in 1955, extending runway 11/29 to 6,562ft to accommodate jets in 1964, plus apron expansion and the installation of ILS and weather radar. On September 1, 1965, as a consequence of a government order, Sondika Airport became Bilbao Airport, and has remained so ever since. In 1975, the runway was paved and the orientation changed from 11/29 to 10/28, and in 1977 the new 8,530ft-long runway 12/30 was inaugurated. Further upgrades to the terminal were implemented in the 1980s, but increasing passenger numbers during the 1990s, coupled with creaking infrastructure, made it clear that a leap forward was required.

Gehry and Guggenheim

Long ago, Bilbao was a gritty, industrial port, an important economic centre, yet one that struggled to find a slot in the holiday brochures. Bombings and assassinations by the Basque separatist movement, ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna – Basque Homeland and Liberty), did little to promote the region as a desirable tourist destination. As the end of the 20th century approached, it was a city in decline with semi-abandoned docks and failing heavy industry.

In 1991, the Basque government made a proposal to the Guggenheim Foundation, that it would fund the construction of a museum on the banks of the River Nervión in the run-down docks to breathe new life into the heart of the city. In return, the foundation would manage and curate the institution. The intention was to kick-start regeneration with a stunning cultural statement.

Canadian-born, US-based architect, Frank Gehry, created the acclaimed design, which opened as the Guggenheim Bilbao in October 1997, adding an element of design-conscious DNA to the city constitution in the process. The term 'Bilbao Effect' gained prominence in the period after the opening, it being a catalyst for the revitalisation of the urban environment, driving cultural and economic renewal. The museum became an iconic symbol, a world-famous tourist attraction that helped put the city on the maps of overseas visitors and, in the years following, visitor numbers to Bilbao have more than doubled. As tourism started to increase, the next logical step was to welcome visitors with a statement airport design that would become northern Spain's primary gateway.

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BELOW: *The airport opened on November 19, 2000* AENA

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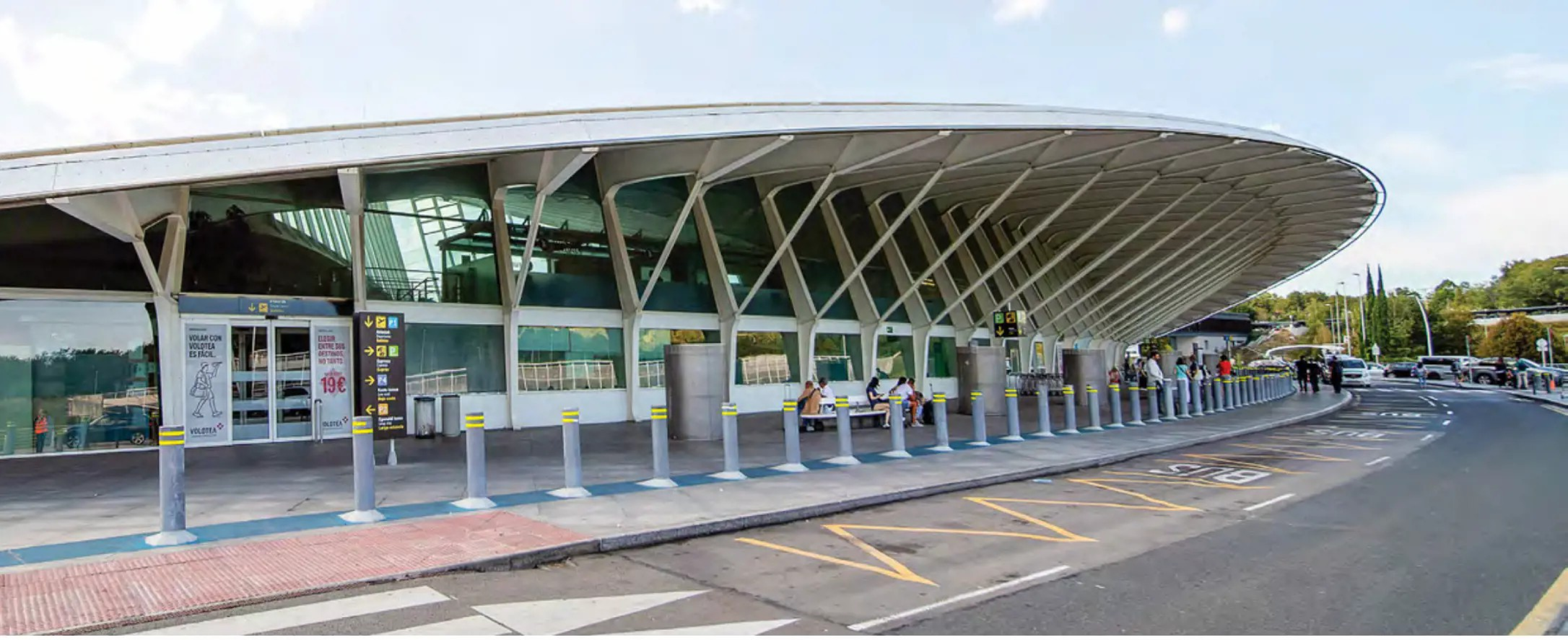
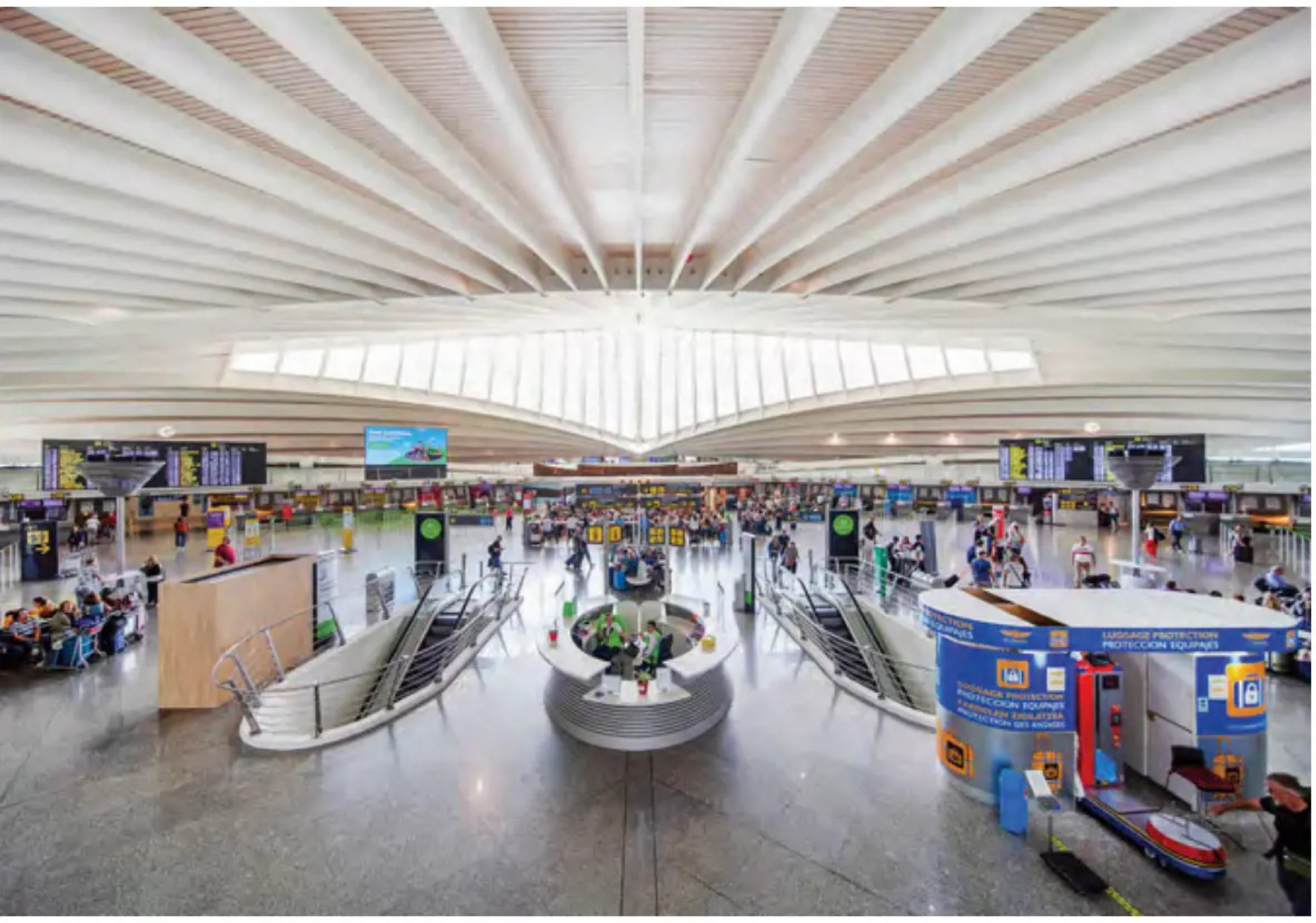




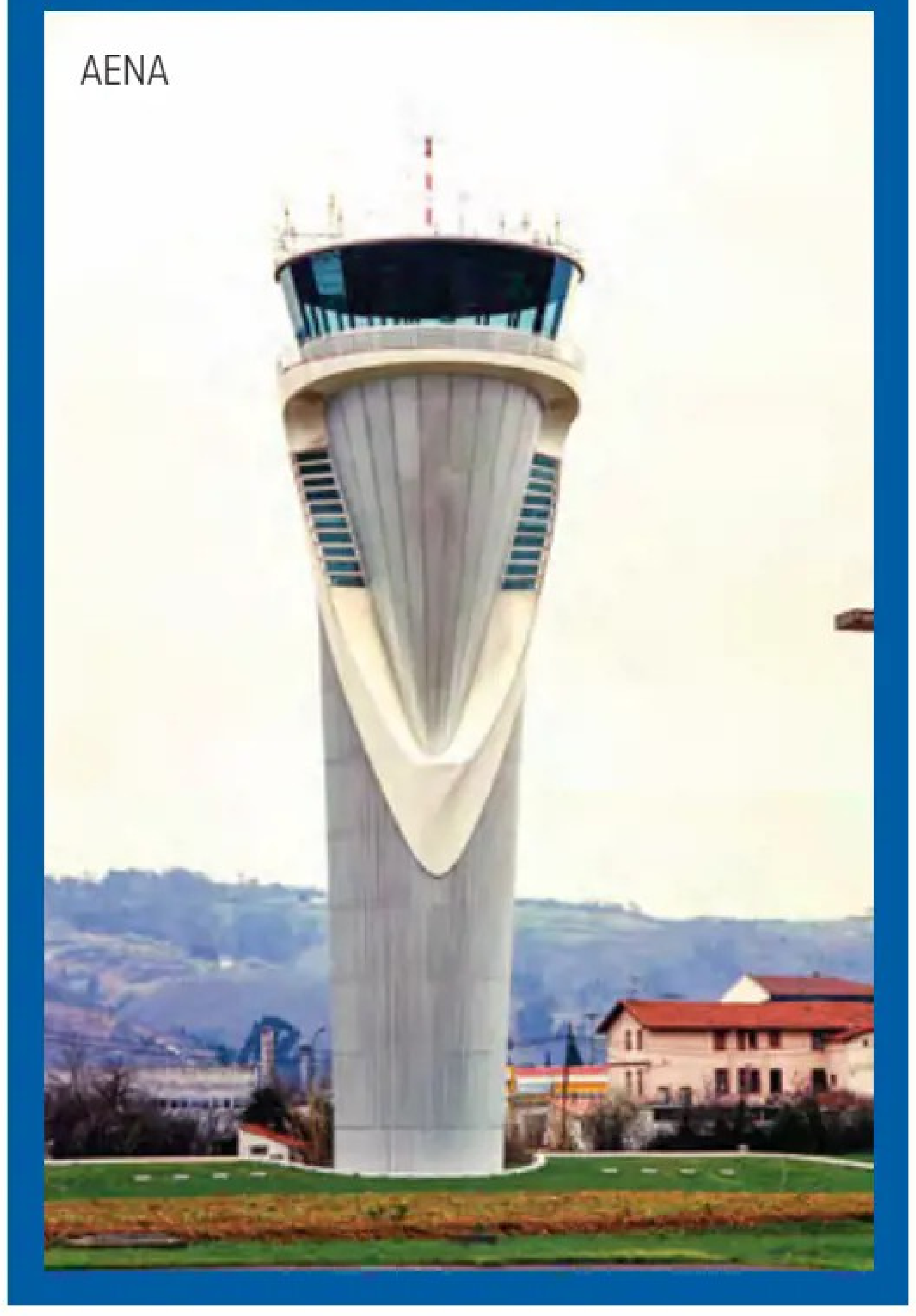
ABOVE: ***The drop-off zone in the departures area*** AENA

LEFT: ***In the cathedralesque central atrium, canted glazing allows light to flood in from the beak-like pinnacle*** AENA

BELOW: ***Calatrava's design gave the Basque region's residents the statement airport they wanted as northern Spain's primary gateway*** ALAMY/GORDON BELL

The control tower

Calatrava's design for the control tower is a concrete structure, clad in aluminium, 138ft in height and teardrop-shaped in cross-section. He had wanted 360° glazing on the air-traffic control level, but that part of the design was not approved. Located to the south of the runway intersection for more complete views of the airfield, it was put into service in May 1999.



AENA

Calatrava's citadel

Based in Zurich, Valencia-born architect Santiago Calatrava began his practice in 1981, and was in the completion phase of the TGV railway station at Lyon/Saint-Exupéry when construction work at Bilbao started. He was first commissioned to design a new, from-the-ground-up, four-gate terminal for Bilbao in 1990 by Spanish airports operator, Aena, expanded to an eight-gate design in 1994. His dynamic style, almost always in white, incorporates sculptural themes and natural motifs such as bones, wings or plants, emphasising flowing curves and towering heights that allow light to rain down. With a tip of the hat to the curvaceous symmetry of Eero Saarinen's gull-wing design for the TWA Flight Center at New York/JFK, and the soaring, light-absorbing main terminal at Washington/Dulles, Calatrava set to work.

The new build would be located in Loiu, to the north of runway 12/30 and involved the construction of a section of dual-carriageway, new access roads and car parks. The final design had as its focus a central atrium that reached up to a 60ft-high, beak-like pinnacle, canted and glazed, allowing light to flood into the heart of the building.

Two symmetrical wings were extended laterally for more than 450ft on either side of the centre point. With its sleek, highly-stylised shape, it resembles a bird in readiness to take flight and has been nicknamed La Paloma (The Dove). Approaching the terminal, it appears to be at an eternal

launch point, a huge white bird about to break the bond of gravity.

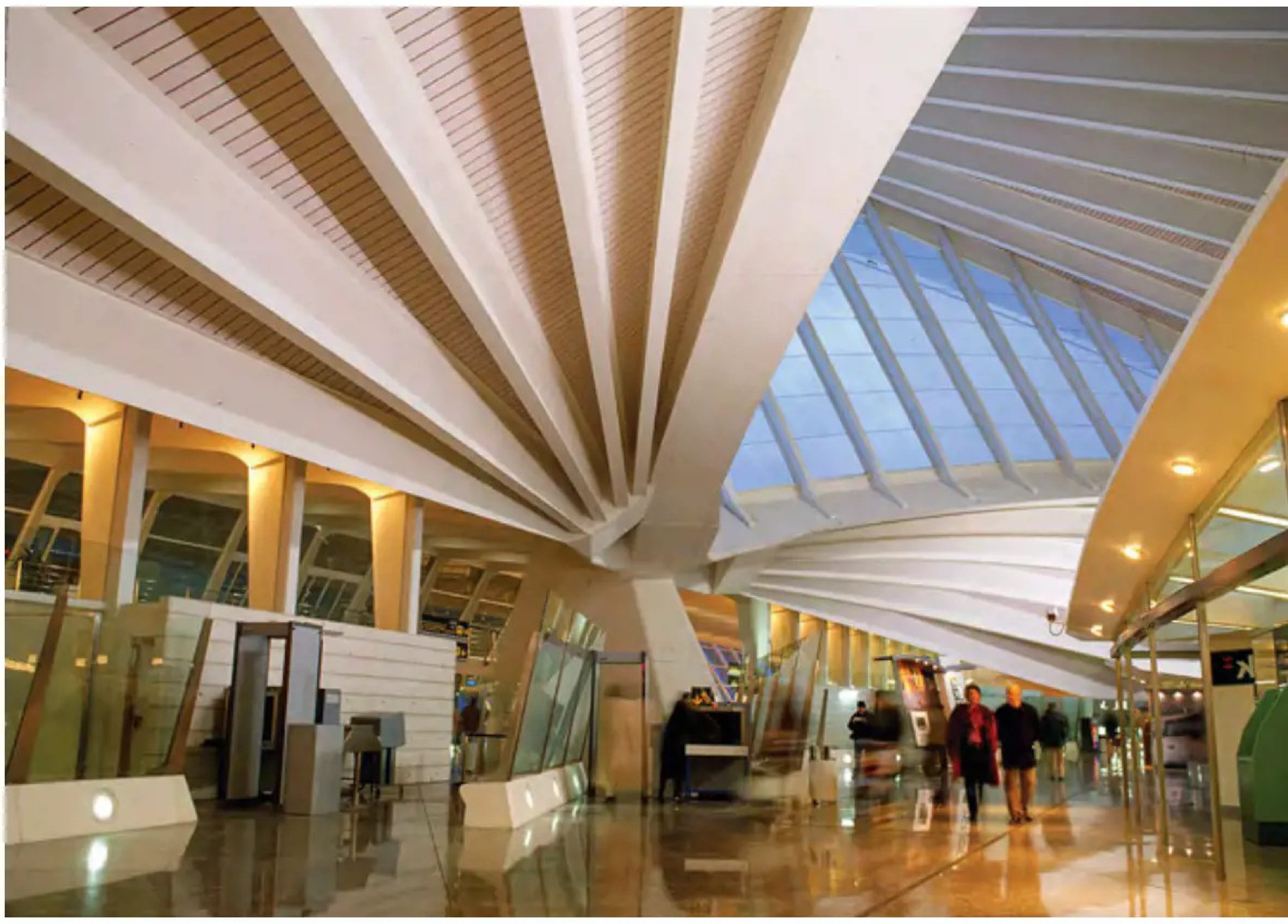
Built primarily in concrete and steel and predominantly white in colour, the extensive use of glass amplifies the amount of natural light that cascades into the structure. Straight lines are something of a rarity, from the macro to the micro, from ceiling beams to seating, curvilinear is Calatrava's style. It offers open, uncluttered spaces and marble floors. At a superficial level it is a simple, serene structure; in terms of engineering it is far more complex. The upper floor houses check-in counters, security and the departure zone, while the lower floor has six baggage carousels in arrivals.

The five-storey building that houses the short-stay parking and car hire is discreetly tucked into a grassy embankment north of the terminal,

»

ABOVE: ***Vueling is the most prominent airline at Bilbao, flying more than 3.3 million passengers in 2024*** VINCENZO PACE

RIGHT: ***Although it appears to be a serene and simple structure, at close quarters the depth and complexity of the engineering become obvious*** AENA



BELOW: ***Eurowings operates routes to Bilbao from Berlin, Dusseldorf, Hamburg and Stuttgart*** VINCENZO PACE

> "Approaching the terminal, it appears to be at an eternal launch point, a huge white bird about to break the bonds of gravity"

> “The increasing popularity of Bilbao as an on-trend tourist destination has helped airlines fill their cabins”

to which it is connected by a 328ft subterranean walkway – a refreshing change from the concrete towers that are often found adjacent to terminals. The long-stay parking is connected to the terminal by a ground-level 975ft covered walkway. La Paloma opened on November 19, 2000.

What it’s like

With the terminal set into a gentle slope, passengers going through security find themselves looking down on parked aircraft, through floor-to-ceiling windows offering excellent views of the apron and runways. The departure lounge can feel crowded during peak times of the day – passenger numbers have more than doubled since the terminal opened, yet movements have only increased by 15%, which suggests it has welcomed ever-larger aircraft over the years. There are 14 gates, six with airbridges, plus 15 remote parking stands that are popular with low-cost operators. In the departures area, there are two lounges, nine restaurants and cafes and seven retail outlets including duty free.

Twenty-five airlines offer a blend of year-round and seasonal flights to 55 international and 39 domestic destinations. The passenger mix comprises 47% leisure, 27% business and 21% who are visiting friends and relatives. Fifteen years ago, the airport processed 2.7 million domestic and 930,000 international visitors, but by the end of 2024 the change was stark as it welcomed 2.9 million domestic and 3.9 million international visitors. The increasing popularity of Bilbao as an on-trend tourist destination has helped airlines fill their cabins.

ABOVE: ***In 2009, almost 75% of flights at the airport were domestic*** AENA

The European network is comprehensive, with connections to 20 capital cities across the continent, reflecting the popularity of city breaks and business trips in both directions. It offers a healthy mix of legacy carriers and eight low-cost operators – Ryanair is no longer among them although it does maintain a presence at the much smaller Vitoria Airport 40 miles to the south. Long-haul flights have been a relatively recent development, with United Airlines first to take the plunge on June 1, 2025,

Most popular destinations in 2024

	Passengers
Madrid/Barajas	810,000
Barcelona/El Prat	694,000
London/Gatwick	413,000
Seville	354,000
Málaga/Costa del Sol	351,000
Palma de Mallorca	313,000
Amsterdam/Schiphol	288,000
Munich	284,000
Frankfurt	267,000
Paris/Charles de Gaulle	226,000

Most popular airlines in 2024

	Passengers
Vueling	3,311,822
Volotea	629,151
Lufthansa	550,874
Air Europa	530,840
Iberia	392,528
KLM	220,219
easyJet	176,349
Air Nostrum	128,711
Air France	125,950
Eurowings	103,021

LEFT: ***Floor-to-ceiling windows in the departures area offer excellent views of the apron and runways*** ALAMY/JAVIER LARREA

ABOVE: *United Airlines Boeing 757-224, N19136 (c/n 29285), completed the inaugural transatlantic service to Bilbao, when flight UA633 from New York/Newark touched down on June 1, 2025* DAVID DE HARO/EUROPA PRESS VIA GETTY IMAGES

with a thrice weekly seasonal service utilising its 40-strong, 176-seat, two-class fleet of Boeing 757-200s.

Looking out across the apron, the most popular aircraft type seen at the airport by quite some way is the ubiquitous Airbus A320. The facility also regularly welcomes A220s, A319s and A321s, as well as Boeing 737s, the Bombardier CRJs of Air Nostrum, Embraer E190s of Air France Hop and E195-E2s belonging to KLM Cityhopper. The city will not be connected to Spain's high-speed train network until 2027 at the earliest, which means flying will remain popular on the shorter domestic routes for some time to come.

Legacy

Criticisms surrounding cost overruns, construction delays and functionality problems have dogged some of Calatrava's projects and Bilbao fell into the functionality category. Initially, a proper arrivals area was non-existent, spitting passengers and their freshly collected baggage on to the kerbside, though the installation of a glass wall eventually better protected them from the elements. Because the central element of the terminal design was so complete, another criticism had been that it offered little opportunity for future expansion. Some internal modifications took place in 2005-2006, leaving the facility with 36 check-in desks and double the retail space. One aspect this design did offer was the option to extend the two wings, add more airbridges and thus expand capacity.

After the closure of the old Carlos Haya terminal, La Paloma handled 2.5 million passengers in its first year, increasing to 3.9 million by 2010, 5.9 million in 2019 and 6.8 million in 2024. Calatrava's design was for a maximum capacity of six million. Plans to extend the terminal wings and increase capacity to eight million were first revealed in 2009, but the project was delayed before gaining fresh momentum in 2024; the current intention is to start work between 2027 and 2031.

In the years since Gehry and Calatrava first rode into town with their drawing boards, the design DNA of the city has continued to evolve. French designer Philippe Starck oversaw the redefining of the wine warehouse, re-opening in 2010 as Azkuna Zentro, a multi-purpose venue. Argentine architect César Pelli designed the 541ft-high Iberdrola Tower that opened in 2012. Bilbao native, César Azcárate, oversaw the rebuilding of the San Mamés Stadium, which was inaugurated in 2013. And in 2012, British-Iraqi architect Zaha Hadid created the masterplan for the ongoing Zorrozaurre project, the man-made island in the centre of the city.

The old Carlos Haya terminal still stands, though the original entrance is bricked up. Airside, the once-busy apron is used for light aircraft and executive visitors. As the candles are blown out on the 25th birthday cake on November 19, it is unquestionably clear the Calatrava terminal has added to the appeal of the city as a contemporary destination, building on Gehry's 'Bilbao Effect'. The resuscitated city centre and La Paloma have helped catapult the airport to the status of premier regional hub, ahead of facilities such as Pamplona, San Sebastián, Santander, Vitoria and Biarritz across the border in France. With the increase in international passengers over the last 15 years, the airport has become perennially entrenched among the 15 busiest in Spain, currently sitting in 12th place.

The city that not so long ago struggled to find its way into holiday brochures is now a popular city-break destination, a place to enjoy Basque maritime cuisine, culture and state-of-the-art design. In time, expect its wings to expand a little further, and the facility to fly a little higher. **AW**

BELOW: *Calatrava's style is curvilinear, primarily in concrete, steel and glass, using natural themes such as bones, wings and plants* ALAMY/ LUCAS VALLECILLOS

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Jet

Talkin' bout an orange revolution

One man brought about the low-cost air travel revolution in the UK and Europe, with a bold, orange airline called easyJet. Founder **Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou** writes exclusively for *Airliner World* about the story behind the company

ABOVE: ***With a dream and £5m from his father, Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou revolutionised air travel in the UK and Europe*** PA IMAGES/ ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Dear readers,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this easyJet 30th anniversary special supplement, brought to you by *Airliner World*.

Most people assume my airline business adventures began at 7am on November 10, 1995, when the first easyJet flight took to the skies from Luton. In fact, I started working on my start-up airline dream a couple of years before that first flight. My first (and only) boss was my father, Loucas, who was a self-made shipping magnate. I learned the business from him and started my own shipping company, Stelmar, in 1992. However, nobody gave me credit for that venture because they assumed I was taking instructions from my father. I decided to prove myself to him and the world by entering an industry he knew nothing about, and that was

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easyJet

ABOVE: ***The airline started life with a pair of Boeing 737-200s, wet-leased from GB Airways*** EASYJET

consumer-facing (not business-to-business or B2B like shipping), so I could build a world-famous brand. I am eternally grateful to my father for financing my dreams!

I became interested in the low-cost airlines that were flourishing in the US following deregulation, which was coming to Europe. To me, it felt like a once-in-a-generation opportunity.

I travelled to Seattle to visit Boeing, and then flew with the low-cost airline Southwest in order to understand their business model. Also, for the first time in my life, I stayed in a budget hotel called Motel 6. I realised that these businesses, with a similar brand positioning, were using a geographical brand name and a price point brand name, which I believed was inefficient.

At that point, I had the idea of starting a range of businesses under the overarching brand with the efficiency of sharing one brand. The prefix "easy" came to me in a bar in 1994 when I jotted down different possibilities on a napkin. I'd previously considered calling the airline Stelair to complement my shipping company, but as I like to say, sanity trumped vanity. So instead of Southwest and Motel 6, I decided to create easyJet and easyHotel which sounds much better. By keeping ownership of the easyJet brand in my company easyGroup, I created a steady income stream from the royalties, which I now use to give back to society through the Stelios Foundation.

I decided to design the logo myself and chose a colour, orange, I believed would stand out from the flag carriers who mainly were using combinations of blue, white and red after their flags.

I chose Luton to be easyJet's first home after negotiating a good deal per passenger flown. They even threw in an office space in an old shed by the runway. We painted it orange and named it easyLand, with the street leading up to it named easyWay, our first two easy brand extensions!

Next, I got rid of the free in-flight meal that airlines offered back then. Instead, we sold refreshments onboard via our easyKiosk, creating a world first with a new revenue stream and our fourth brand extension.

The first flight took off on November 10, 1995, and thankfully, it was full, with all seats sold at £29. The rest, as they say, is history! AW

Stelios

Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou

BELOW: ***Today, the easyJet Group boasts a fleet of over 350 Airbus A320 Family aircraft*** MARTIN NEEDHAM

easyJet
easyJet
NEO

How 30 years have flown

For 30 years, easyJet has disrupted the status quo in European aviation. During that time, it has faced countless challenges but has continued to innovate and evolve. **Lee Cross** looks back at the history of the UK's original low-cost carrier

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It was a murky morning at London/Luton on November 10, 1995, when a Boeing 737-204, G-BECG (c/n 21335) piloted by Captain Fred Rivett, took to the skies as flight EZY 121 bound for Glasgow. Along the fuselage was a telephone number, in bright orange Pantone 021C colours, while on the tail, the name of the new airline in the now iconic Cooper Black font, easyJet. On board were passengers whose airfare had been "as affordable as a pair of jeans".

This was the advent of the low-cost revolution in the UK, brought about by Greek shipping entrepreneur Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou. Looking to diversify his business portfolio, the businessman had identified a gap in the market for a low-fare airline to challenge the legacy carriers.

BELOW: ***From a fleet of two leased 737-200s, easyJet grew to operate over 80 737s, before making the switch to Airbus in 2002 and now flies over 350 A320 Family jets*** EASYJET

With £5m in backing from his father, two 737-204s, Charlie Golf and G-BECH (c/n 21336), wet-leased from GB Airways, easyJet was ready for take-off. Glasgow and Edinburgh were chosen as the first routes from its Luton base, and on October 23, less than a month before the first flights were scheduled to begin, the phone lines were opened and the first bookings for the new airline were taken.

The early months were tough. As the UK's first low-cost carrier (LCC), easyJet was a new concept for travellers. Haji-Ioannou spent a considerable amount of money on a massive advertising campaign that would see the bright orange colours of easyJet splashed across full-page advertisements in newspapers, as well as on television and radio.

A rival to be reckoned with

As the numbers improved and Aberdeen was added to its network, the legacy lot were forced to take notice, slashing their fares on London to Scotland services in a bid to oust the competition.

In March 1996, former Air New Zealand boss Ray Webster was appointed as easyJet's new managing director, just as the airline readied itself to receive its first aircraft. The ex-Monarch Airlines Boeing 737-3Y0, G-EZYA (c/n 23498), allowed the carrier to launch its first international flights to Amsterdam on April 24, 1996, followed thereafter by Barcelona and Nice as additional 737-300s were added, flown under Air Foyle's AOC (Air Operator's Certificate).

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easyJet
00.000
G-EZYH

I am an
easyJet
Crew Member
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easyJet

ABOVE: *With its bright orange colouring, the airline's laid-back look was even reflected in early crew uniforms, which carried the line "I am an easyJet crew member" with emphasis on the easy* EASYJET

Finally, in October 1997, easyJet was awarded its own AOC by the UK's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). This, coupled with an order for a dozen brand-new 737-300s, allowed the airline to open its second base at Liverpool John Lennon Airport, with daily flights to Amsterdam and Nice taking to the skies on October 26, 1997.

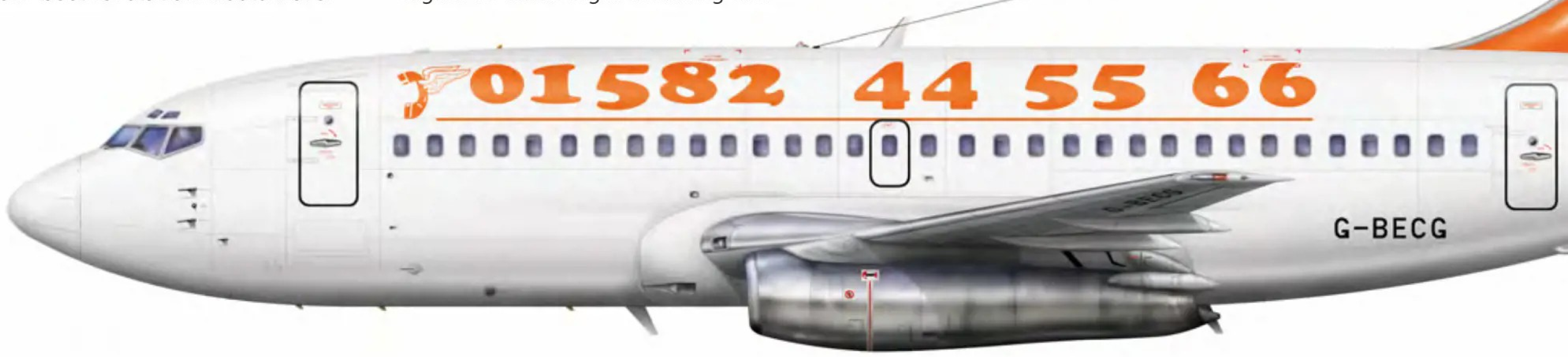
By now, competition in the low-cost market was heating up. Ryanair, which had previously been a loss-making full-service carrier, had switched to the low-cost model, and easyJet's monopoly at Luton had been impacted by the arrival of Debonair, a LCC rival established by aviation veteran Franco Mancassola.

Thirty-five miles away at London/Heathrow, British Airways management was becoming tetchy. They had believed that easyJet and its low-cost revolution would never last. Now, forced to take notice, in November 1996, CEO Bob Ayling entered talks with Haji-Ioannou, about the possibility of acquiring a stake in its rival. The talks were brief, as Ayling claimed that regulatory authorities would never approve such a deal. Then BA announced it would set up its own LCC subsidiary called Go.

Haji-Ioannou was enraged. Despite a high-profile court battle, Go took to the skies from London/Stansted in May 1998. Never one to shy away from free publicity, the colourful easyJet boss and several other members of the team purchased tickets for the maiden flight to Rome/Fiumicino and arrived wearing bright orange jumpsuits, handing out free flights to Go's first passengers.

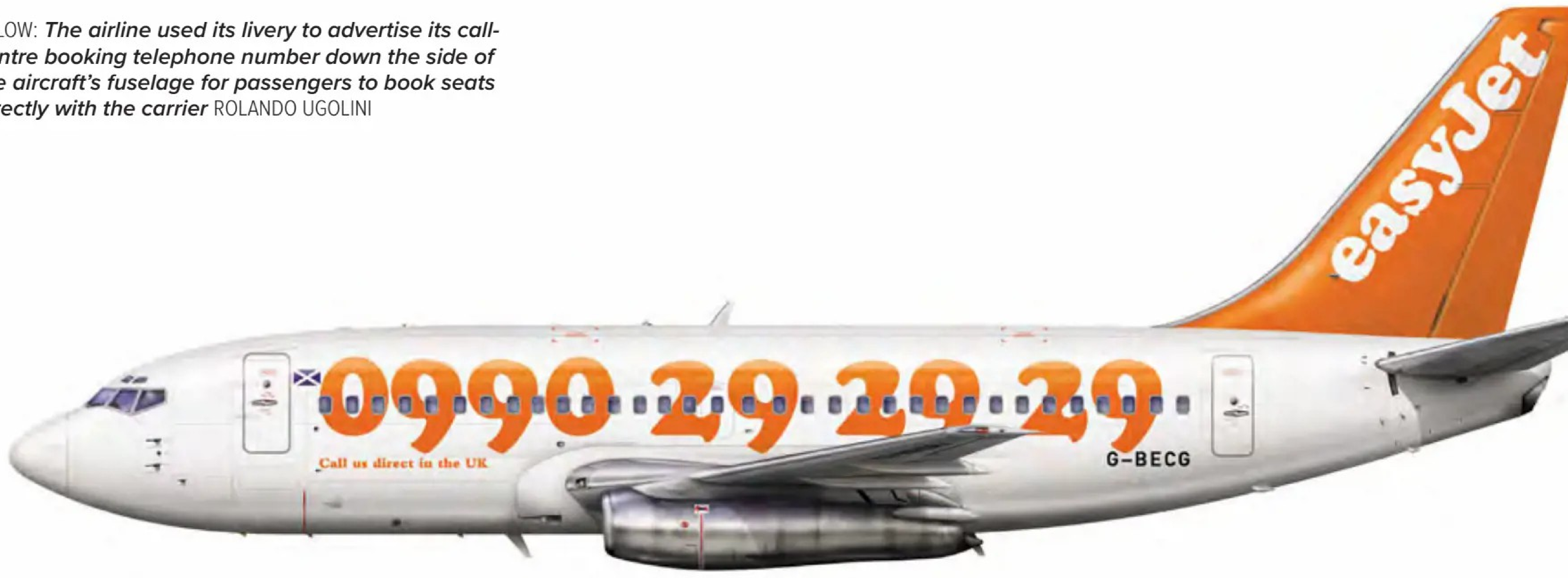
Further battles between the pair ensued, not least when Go launched a £15 one-way fare on flights to Edinburgh. Claiming the flights were subsidised by its parent, Haji-Ioannou took the matter to the European Commission (EC) and added 'Stop BA, Stop Go' titles to 737-33V, G-EZYH (c/n 29332). The EC took no further action, but the bitter battle rumbled on.

In April 1997, easyJet's pioneering spirit continued when it launched its own website, easyJet.com. Initially, this provided information about the carrier, and if you wished to book a seat, you were redirected to the airline's call centre. However, Haji-Ioannou knew that the internet was the future and placed a different telephone number to track the volume of calls made via the website. The numbers spoke for themselves, and in April 1998, easyJet sold its first seats



BELOW: *The bright orange telephone number and easyJet branding that adorned the airline's early 737s made a bold statement at airports, among the sea of red, white and blue liveried aircraft around at the time* ROLANDO UGOLINI

BELOW: ***The airline used its livery to advertise its call-centre booking telephone number down the side of the aircraft's fuselage for passengers to book seats directly with the carrier*** ROLANDO UGOLINI



online. A year later, easyJet.com sold its millionth seat. Before long, the big orange phone number that had adorned the fleet was replaced by the carrier's website, along with the strapline 'The Web's Favourite Airline' in another dig at its rival BA and its 'The World's Favourite Airline' moniker.

March on Europe

In 1997, the open skies policy was introduced to the European Union, and easyJet had bold ambitions to expand its presence across Europe. Initially, the airline planned to open a base in Amsterdam by acquiring Schiphol-based Air Holland, although talks soon fell through. In March 1998, it purchased a 40% stake in ailing Swiss carrier TEA Switzerland AG for CHF34m (£32m). This was later increased to 49%. It was then rebranded as easyJet Switzerland in April 1999 and its operations moved from Basel to Geneva.

A month later, the airline was ready to fly its inaugural service to Barcelona when the Swiss authorities pulled its route licence. Unperturbed, Haji-Ioannou refunded all the passengers and operated it as a private charter, collecting donations from customers in a hat, which recouped approximately 80% of the fares.

Subsequent flights were run as easyJet Tours, offering a "package holiday" rather than a scheduled service. Initially, the company provided a bus service from Geneva city centre to the airport to meet tour operator requirements. Swissair objected, stating that easyJet would also need to provide accommodation for its passengers. To circumvent this, five tents were purchased and pitched on a campsite outside Barcelona. Needless to say, only a handful of customers took up the offer.

After carrying its millionth passenger in June 2000, easyJet was floated on the London Stock Exchange on November 15, ending its first day of trading with a valuation of £860m. The flotation raised £195m for the airline, which it planned to use to expand its fleet. The airline had recently welcomed its first Next-Generation Boeing 737-73V, G-EZJA (c/n 30235), after first ordering 15 of the type in July 1998, followed by an order for 17 more in March 2000.

Then came 9/11. As legacy carriers crumbled, easyJet went from strength to strength. Just a month after the terrorist attacks, it announced its first set of results since flotation, with full-year pre-tax profits up 81% to £40m on revenues of £356.9m.

Time to go

Buoyed by this success, easyJet was keen to eradicate rival Go and in December 2001 offered £390m »

BELOW: ***Glasgow and Edinburgh were chosen as the airline's initial routes, with Scottish services being the biggest market from London at the time*** EASYJET

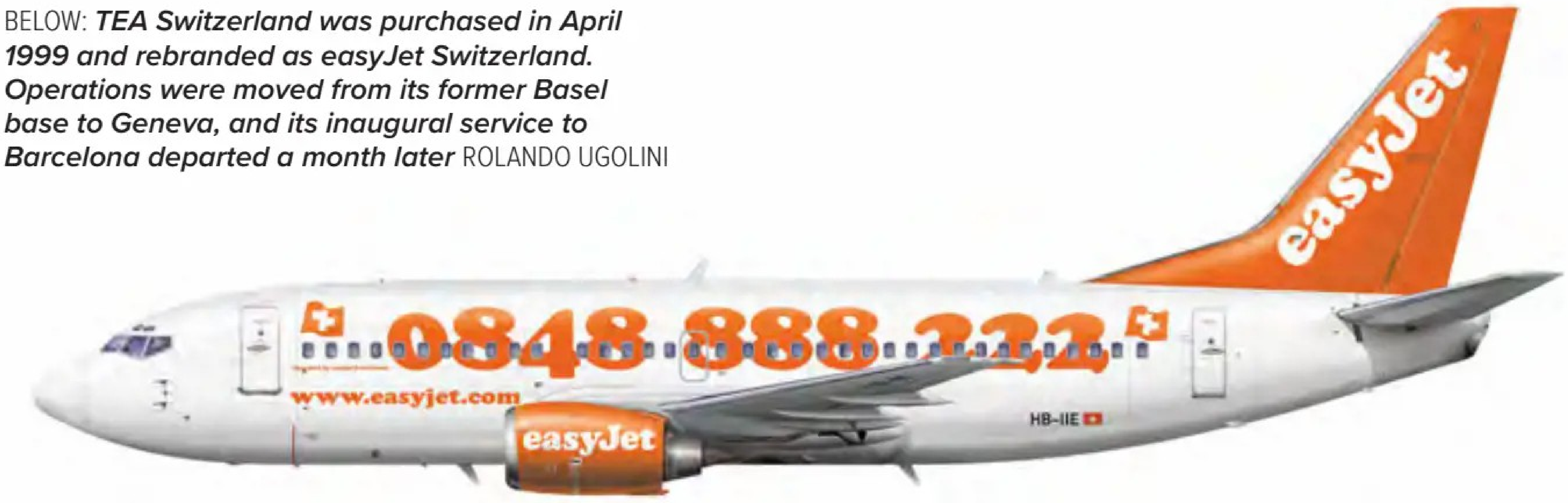
in cash and shares to purchase the carrier from its new venture capital owner, 3i. The offer was rejected, but easyJet persisted, and on May 16, 2002, a £384m deal was accepted. Overnight, easyJet became Europe's biggest low-cost carrier, with a fleet of 54 737s (compared to Ryanair's 44), and almost doubled its route network from 45 to 81, with new bases at London/Stansted, Bristol and East Midlands.

Go was not easyJet's only takeover target at the time. A few days after the purchase, it announced it had signed an exclusive agreement with British Airways, giving it the option to purchase Deutsche BA. Valid for a year, the deal meant that easyJet had to pay a monthly fee as it looked to convert the airline into easyJet Germany. However, talks with its pilots fell through, and the deal was removed from the table in March 2003.

ABOVE: ***On October 26, 1997, easyJet opened its second base at Liverpool John Lennon Airport with flights to Amsterdam and Nice*** LIVERPOOL JOHN LENNON AIRPORT

The first Boeing 737-73V, G-EZJA (c/n 30235), was delivered in October 2000, following an order for 15 of the type in July 1998 BOEING

BELOW: ***TEA Switzerland was purchased in April 1999 and rebranded as easyJet Switzerland. Operations were moved from its former Basel base to Geneva, and its inaugural service to Barcelona departed a month later*** ROLANDO UGOLINI



In April 2002, a shock announcement was made when its founder and chairman, Stelios Haji-Ioannou revealed his intention to step down. The move came amid mounting pressure from shareholders who had expressed concerns about his involvement with the airline.

Airbus switch

He left in November that year, a month after easyJet had inked a landmark deal for 120 CFM56-powered Airbus A319s, with options on another 120 following a hard-fought battle between Airbus and Boeing. Industry observers believed that Boeing would win the order, as easyJet was already a long-time customer and had built its business around Southwest's low-cost model of a single-fleet operation.

Airbus, keen to win an order from an LCC, announced that it would increase capacity of its A319s from 145 seats to 150, with the possibility of expanding this further to 156. At easyJet's request, Airbus also added an extra overwing exit to make the latter seating arrangement possible. The manufacturer also agreed a deal that meant introducing the A319 would not prove any more expensive to easyJet than if it had chosen Boeing during the first two years after delivery.

The first A319-111, HB-JZB (c/n 2043), was delivered to the airline's

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BELOW: ***After inking a deal for 120 CFM56-powered A319s, with options on another 120 in November 2002, the first examples were delivered to the airline's Swiss subsidiary from September 2003*** KEY-TONY DIXON

easyJet
easyJet.com
avourite airline
HB-JZJ
easyJet

On December 16, 1999, easyJet commenced flights at London/Gatwick with a service to Geneva before establishing a base at the West Sussex facility in February 2002. Since then, the airline has grown to become the airport's biggest operator EASYJET

BIG @ Gatwick
the web's favourite airline
easyJet
easyJet.com
G-EZJD

Swiss subsidiary in September 2003. Five more arrived by the end of the year. The arrival of Zulu Bravo marked the beginning of a long relationship with the A319, which would see easyJet become the world's largest customer of the type, having purchased a total of 172 examples since the first order.

Following Haji-Ioannou's departure, the FL Group, owner of Icelandair, purchased a 10.1% stake in the LCC in December 2004. The Icelandic group claimed that the deal was part of a long-term trade investment, which it subsequently increased to 16.2% in October the following year. Rumours of a possible takeover were quashed in April 2006, when the shareholding was sold due to the financial crisis in Iceland.

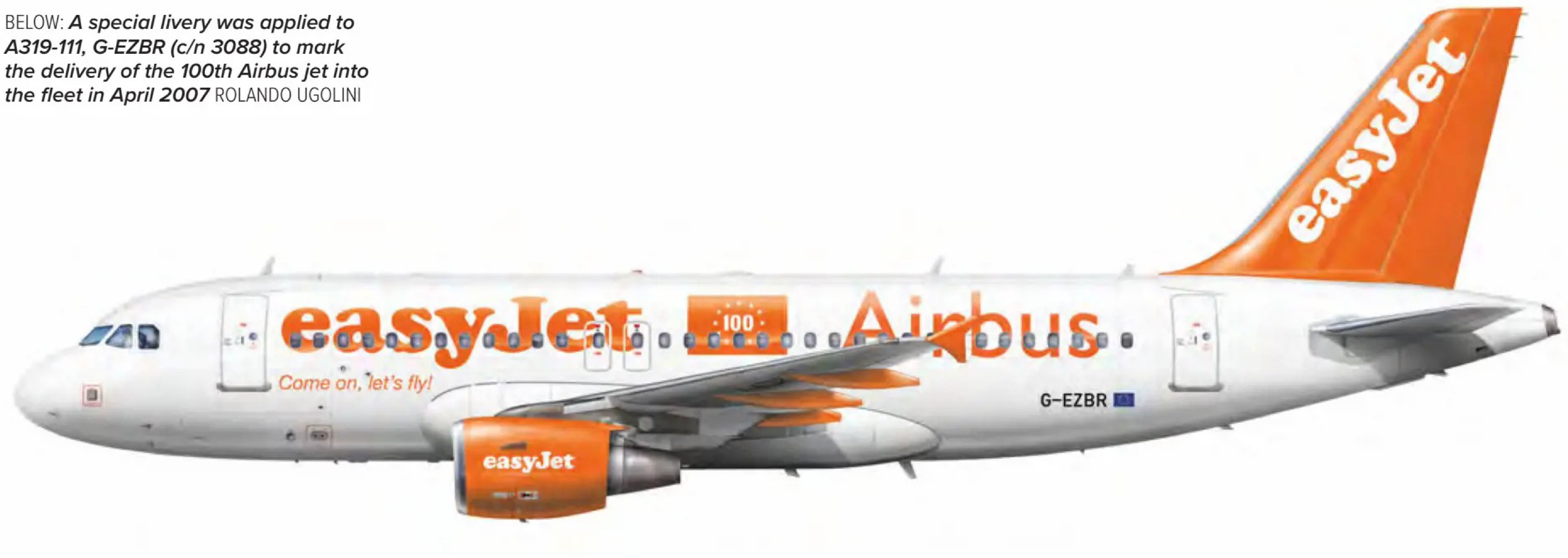
After a decade at the helm, steering the airline to become one of the world's leading low-cost airlines, Ray Webster retired from his role as CEO in December 2005. He was replaced by former RAC chief, Andrew Harrison.

Another "BA" buyout

One of Harrison's biggest milestones was the acquisition of GB Airways, announced in October 2007. The deal,

easyJet
easyJet.com
come on, let's fly!

BELOW: ***A special livery was applied to A319-111, G-EZBR (c/n 3088) to mark the delivery of the 100th Airbus jet into the fleet in April 2007*** ROLANDO UGOLINI



worth £103.5m, meant easyJet would become the largest airline at Gatwick, boosting its operation by 30% and controlling almost a quarter of all slots. It would also give the airline a ready-made base at Manchester with six routes and two based aircraft.

However, a year later, rising fuel prices and the effects of the global financial crisis, coupled with the GB acquisition, hit profit margins, with the airline posting a pre-tax loss of £57.5m in May 2009. To cut costs, the retirement of its Boeing 737 fleet was accelerated, along with its recently inherited ex-GB sub-fleet, which comprised nine A320s and six A321s.

But easyJet's experience with larger Airbus models led to discussions with the manufacturer about converting some of its 115 A319s on order into the larger A320. An announcement was made in August 2008 with 25 airframes being swapped for the 180-seat A320. This theme continued into 2010, and eventually the carrier converted all orders into the A320, with its last A319, G-EZGP (c/n 4787), being delivered in July 2011.

LEFT: ***As more A319s arrived, easyJet began retiring its 737s, phasing out older models like the -300s by 2006, with the final Boeing jets leaving the fleet in 2011*** KEY COLLECTION

Boardroom battles

Harrison was also forced to deal with a rift that emerged between the airline's founder and its board over the carrier's planned fleet expansion. At the time, easyJet was set to welcome 85 new Airbus aircraft over the next three years, bringing the total fleet to around 200. But Haji-Ioannou wanted the fleet to remain at around 190 jets for the next three to four years to restore profit margins.

The battle led to Harrison's departure in December 2009, following chairman Sir Colin Chandler's resignation in April. Harrison would be replaced by Carolyn McCall, the former head of the Guardian Media Group, who took up the role in March 2010. Two months later, Haji-Ioannou stepped down from the board to give himself greater freedom to exercise easyGroup's rights to seek a change to the company's strategy.

The issue rumbled on through much of McCall's tenure. Although some relief came with the revision of the licensing agreement between the airline and easyGroup, in which Haji-Ioannou agreed to surrender the right to appoint himself as chairman, while the airline would pay royalties to use the brand.

Once this was sorted, McCall set about creating her vision of easyJet becoming "Europe's preferred short-haul airline." This included the launch of a new "inclusive fare", aimed at corporate passengers who, at the time, accounted for around 18% of its passengers. It allowed unlimited changes to ticket details within a four-week window and offered free speedy boarding, no booking fees and one free checked-in piece of luggage. In spring 2012, allocated seating was trialled on certain flights before being rolled out across the network in November that year.

Despite Haji-Ioannou's ongoing issues with expansion, easyJet launched an evaluation of its future fleet needs in September 2011, considering the Airbus A320neo, Boeing 737 MAX, and the Bombardier CSeries (now the Airbus A220). In June 2013, Airbus revealed its renewed commitment to easyJet, signing a deal for up to 235 airframes, including 100 A320neos, with options on a further 100, plus 35 A320ceos.

After taking delivery of its 250th Airbus jet, an A320-214, G-EZOL (c/n 6572), in April 2015, easyJet announced its commitment to a higher-density A320, featuring 186 seats. All future deliveries would feature the new configuration, while older aircraft would be retrofitted, resulting in a 2% cost-per-seat saving over the 180-seat variant.

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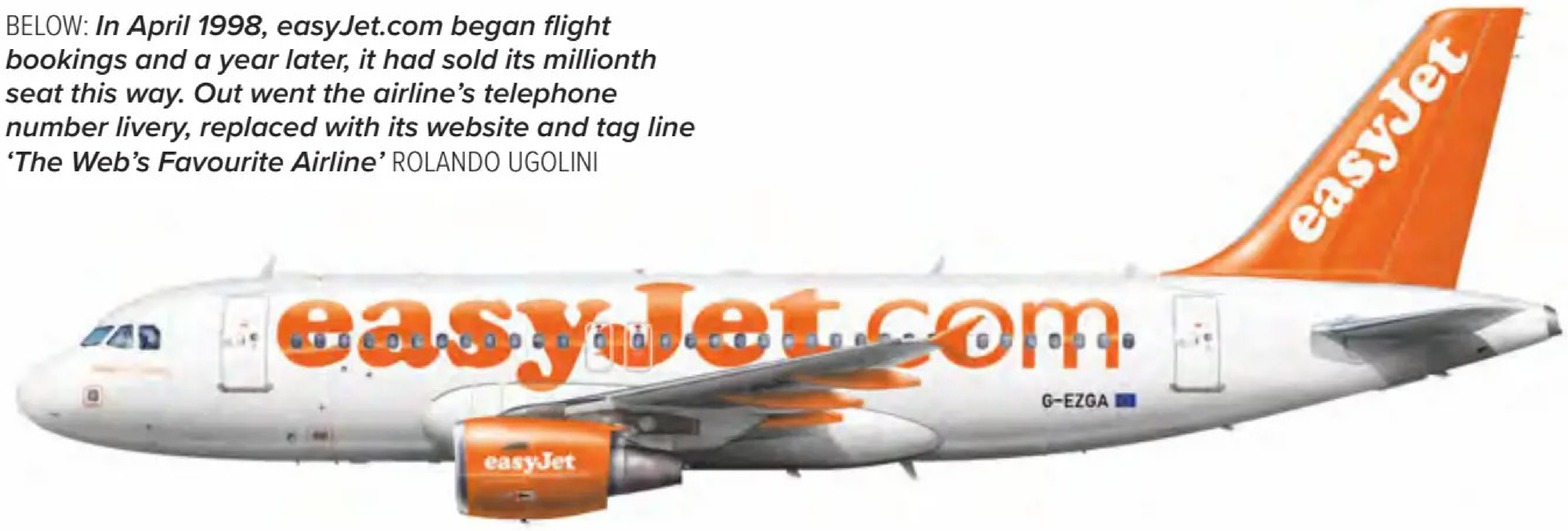
BELOW: ***In April 1998, easyJet.com began flight bookings and a year later, it had sold its millionth seat this way. Out went the airline's telephone number livery, replaced with its website and tag line 'The Web's Favourite Airline'*** ROLANDO UGOLINI



easyJet
easyJet.com
easyJet

ABOVE: ***In August 2008, easyJet made the switch to the larger Airbus A320, swapping 25 of its A319 order for the then 180-seat A320. Eventually, the carrier converted all A319 orders into A320 and later increased the seating capacity to 186***
MARTIN NEEDHAM

This capacity upgauge continued with easyJet finally agreeing to convert 30 of its A320neo orders, the first of which, G-UZHA (c/n 7649), was delivered in June 2017, into the larger 235-seat A321neo in May 2017. The maiden CFM International LEAP-1A-powered jet, G-UZMA (c/n 8314), was handed over at the Farnborough International Air Show in July 2018.

Troublesome twenties

As the airline celebrated its 20th anniversary in November 2015, it was in a buoyant mood, having carried over 600 million passengers on more than 4.7 million flights since its inception.

But a year later, easyJet was faced with the dilemma of what Brexit would mean for its operation. Despite being a UK-based airline, some 36% of its network consisted of routes that did not visit a UK airport. The decision was made to create a new subsidiary. Headquartered in Vienna and with an Austrian AOC, easyJet Europe's first A320-214, OE-IVA (c/n 6970), took to the skies on July 20, 2017.

Three days earlier, McCall revealed that she was stepping down as easyJet chief, to be replaced by former TUI Group leader Johan Lundgren. Her final swan song was the acquisition of part of Air Berlin's operations at Berlin/Tegel, allowing the LCC to commence operations at the historic German facility on January 5, 2018. Along with slots, easyJet also took up leases on 25 of the carrier's A320s in a deal worth around €40m.

Discussions over the takeover of parts of a "restructured Alitalia" were entered, in a bid to strengthen its position in Italy, before withdrawing from the process in early 2019. Later that year, it paid £36m for several slot pairs at Gatwick and Bristol from the defunct UK leisure carrier, Thomas Cook.

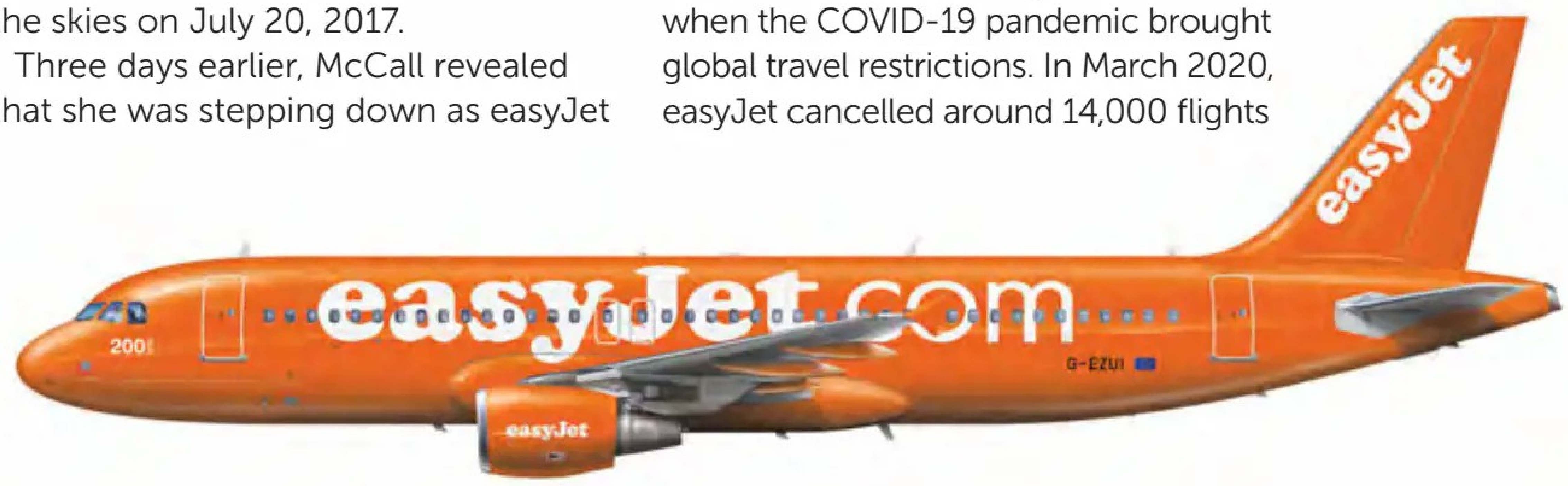
Its collapse led to the formal launch of easyJet Holidays business, aiming to capitalise on the 20 million passengers who already flew with the airline on 'bucket and spade' routes in November 2019.

COVID chaos

But as easyJet Holidays geared up for its first summer, the world ground to a halt when the COVID-19 pandemic brought global travel restrictions. In March 2020, easyJet cancelled around 14,000 flights and soon announced that it would ground the majority of its fleet in a bid to cut costs and preserve cash.

Over 650 rescue and repatriation flights were carried out, transporting some 45,000 passengers. After the final flight on March 29, the entire fleet was grounded, and easyJet went into survival mode. Aircraft deliveries were deferred and 51 airframes were removed from the fleet. Staff levels were reduced by up to 30% through voluntary redundancies, while bases at Newcastle,

BELOW: ***Affectionately known by easyJet staff as 'The flying carrot', A320-214 G-EZUI (c/n 4721) was painted in this special 'inverted' livery to mark the arrival of its 200th Airbus jet***
ROLANDO UGOLINI



easyJet
D-AVZU

London/Stansted and London/Southend were closed. Staff who remained were put on furlough and pilots agreed to part-time working hours.

Some £419m was raised by issuing just under 15% of its share capital. Meanwhile, the airline also agreed to borrow £600m from the UK government's Covid Corporate Financing Facility (CCFF), much to the dismay of the airline's founder, who believed the airline should have instead cancelled its Airbus order.

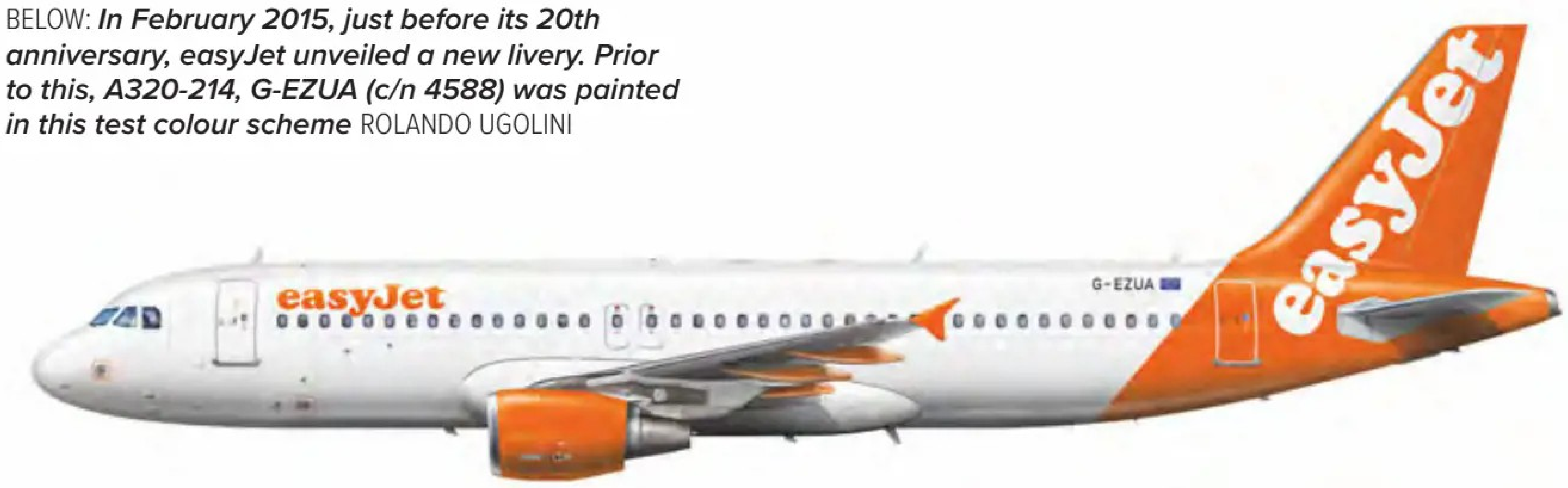
On June 15, 2020, easyJet recommenced limited operations from Gatwick to Aberdeen and Inverness. Further routes were added, as lockdown measures were relaxed in certain countries. For the summer season, it managed to increase its planned operation from 30 to 40%. Flight lines increased from 147 in July to 210 in August, and load factors grew to an encouraging 84%. Then, a fresh wave of travel restrictions during the winter of 2020/21 forced it to once again slash its network to some 20% of planned capacity, while announcing a full-year pre-tax loss of £1.27bn.

As travel restrictions eased and operations ramped up, staffing and supply chain issues forced the airline to cancel flights as it attempted to consolidate its flights to stabilise its operation. In summer 2023, easyJet was forced to cancel around 1,700 flights due to European airspace and ATC challenges.

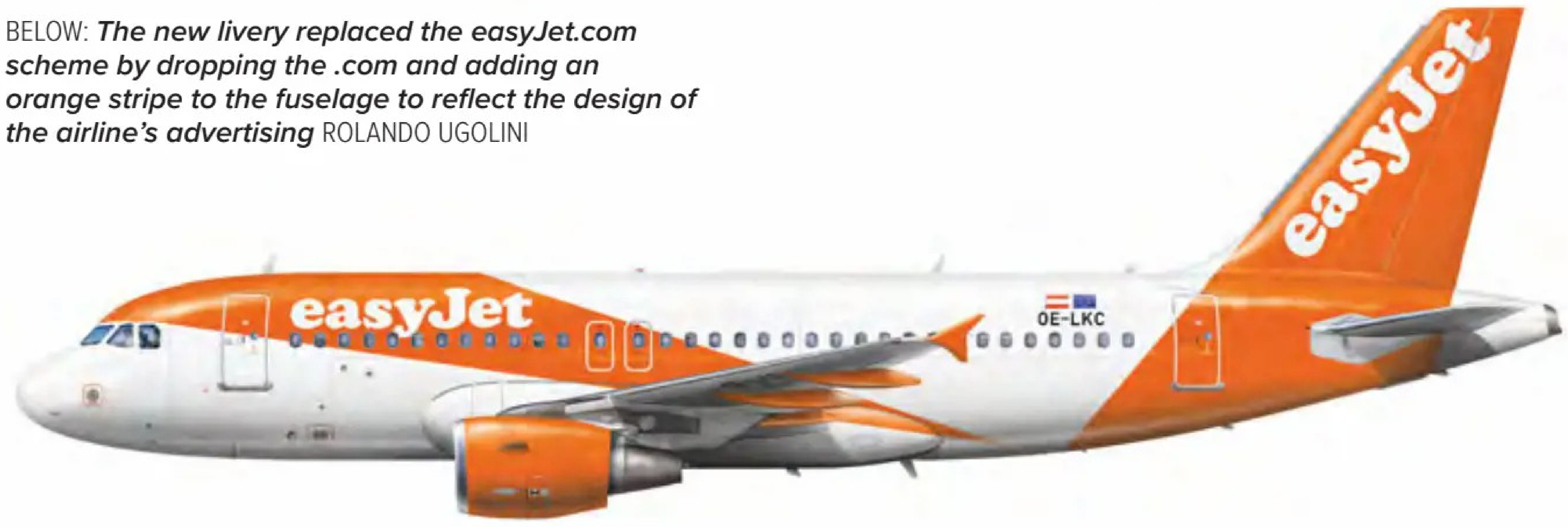
Despite these issues, easyJet's aspiration to become "Europe's most loved airline" bore fruit, as customers returned, helping it to achieve a profit before tax of £455m, a significant turnaround compared to the £27m loss the year before. This, it said, was thanks to increased demand, higher pricing and growth in its holiday business. Its 2024 full-year financials showed a 34% increase year on year, with a headline profit before tax of £610m after another record-breaking summer and a reduction in its winter losses.

Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou's dream and his father's £5m investment have blossomed into one of Europe's best-known low-cost carriers. With a fleet of more than 350 aircraft and over 300 on order, plus purchase rights for another 100, easyJet flies over 1,000 routes to almost 40 countries, serving over 150 airports, from over 30 bases across Europe. Not bad for an airline that was conceived on the back of a napkin. AW

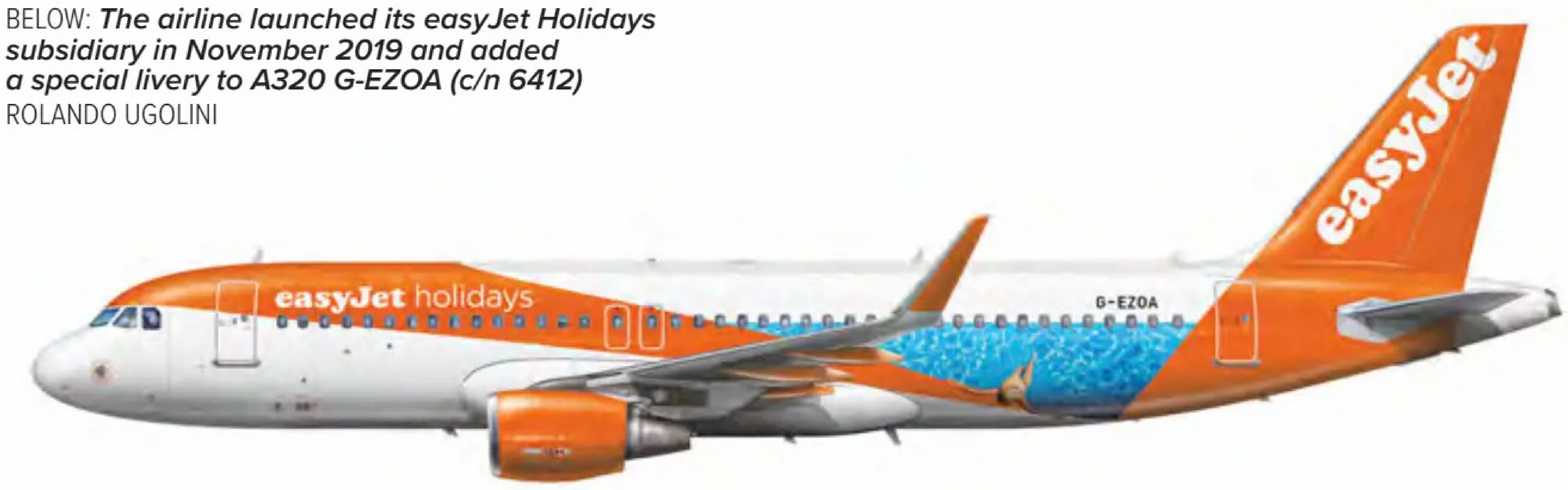
BELOW: ***In February 2015, just before its 20th anniversary, easyJet unveiled a new livery. Prior to this, A320-214, G-EZUA (c/n 4588) was painted in this test colour scheme*** ROLANDO UGOLINI



BELOW: ***The new livery replaced the easyJet.com scheme by dropping the .com and adding an orange stripe to the fuselage to reflect the design of the airline's advertising*** ROLANDO UGOLINI



BELOW: ***The airline launched its easyJet Holidays subsidiary in November 2019 and added a special livery to A320 G-EZOA (c/n 6412)*** ROLANDO UGOLINI



BELOW: ***The Airbus A321neo was delivered to the airline in July 2018, and the carrier currently has 19 in service*** AIRBUS

easyJet
NEO
A321
NEO

View from the top

As easyJet celebrates its 30th anniversary, **Thomas Haynes** sits down with new chief executive **Kenton Jarvis** to discuss the airline's disruptive origins, its hybrid model, and the prospects for future growth – from holidays and Heathrow to the Chinese-built COMAC C919

easyJet
NEO
SO

EasyJet Europe Airbus A320neo, OE-LSO (c/n 11234), is one of 75 examples operated by the low-cost carrier across its three AOCs VINCENZO PACE

Kenton Jarvis became CEO of easyJet on January 1, 2025 EASYJET

You can't miss easyJet's Luton headquarters. The airline occupies Hangar 89, its giant roof emblazoned with the company's name and its interior awash with the trademark orange. In the boardroom – complete with matching orange chairs – we await the arrival of chief executive Kenton Jarvis. He steps in briskly, having carved out a rare gap for *Airliner World* in a day dominated by quarterly financial results. But the focus of our conversation is something much more celebratory: easyJet's 30th anniversary.

Taking the helm

Jarvis began 2025 with a promotion to chief executive after nearly four years as the airline's chief financial officer (CFO) under his predecessor, Johan Lundgren. Six months into the job, he is relishing the change.

"It's been really enjoyable," he reflected. "It's been good to be able to hit the ground running and understand what the opportunities are for the airline and also where we have some challenges."

Unlike his "more inward-facing" CFO role, the new position allows him to spend more time with the staff across the network: "To get to meet more of the people and understand how we have this reputation of being a very welcoming airline has been really important, and they really do care about providing a good service and making sure the customer is comfortable and safe in their flights, but also well served."

Orange origins

Since Stelios Haji-Ioannou launched easyJet in 1995 with guerrilla marketing and its bold orange branding, the airline has prided itself in democratising air travel. This made an impact on Jarvis: "My earliest easyJet memory was watching Stelios run around putting the phone number down the side of the aircraft, and really disrupting the way people thought about travel," he said. "I think that's what attracted me to easyJet, was its purpose to democratise travel. At its heart, that's what it set out to do 30 years ago was to make it affordable."

Today, the carrier has matured into a European heavyweight with

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ABOVE: ***The airline has a significant presence in Geneva owing to its Swiss division***
KEY-THOMAS HAYNES

LEFT: ***The carrier opened two bases on April 2, 2025, at Milan/Linate and Rome/Fiumicino***
EASYJET

a distinctive model. It retains the fundamentals of European low-cost flying – point-to-point routes, high utilisation, crews largely home nightly, unbundled airfares and low ticket prices – yet focuses on primary airports more commonly served by network airlines. Unlike its rivals Ryanair and Wizz Air, the Luton-based carrier spends a lot of time mixing with full-service flag carriers at major primary airports – which makes it look less like a low-cost carrier and more of a hybrid. However, Jarvis said he still believes the operator is a low-cost airline.

"What we do differently is we choose to spend money where we think it's important to the customer," he explained. "We want to serve large conurbations, so those airports are more expensive than asking the customers to drive a bit further and go to the smaller ones, or when they arrive outside of capital cities to get them into capital cities."

BELOW: ***Jarvis said he would be keen to operate at Heathrow if the airport charges were suitable and a reasonable scale of operation could be achieved***
HEATHROW AIRPORT

This push to serve primary airports is a key strategy to easyJet's differentiation in a crowded European LCC market. While Jarvis sees "all airlines in Europe" as easyJet's competitors, he said 70% of the route overlap is with flag carriers and their "sons and daughters" because of the primary airports.

This is easily illustrated by three airports and their respective seat capacity: Amsterdam/Schiphol, Paris/Charles de Gaulle and Geneva, all of which are within easyJet's top ten for number of seats offered in 2025. Ryanair – which is arguably its largest low-cost competitor – does not fly to Paris or Geneva, meaning the competition comes from local flag carriers Air France and SWISS, respectively. At Schiphol, the Irish LCC only flies two routes to Dublin and Malaga, leaving the majority of easyJet's competition to KLM. For its part, Wizz Air doesn't fly to any of these airports.

Network aspirations

As for future network growth, Jarvis said he still sees opportunities in the UK, despite expansions at most of

its regional bases in the last year. He hinted at adding more aircraft to the recently reopened London/Southend base and pointed to the scheduled opening of a Newcastle facility next year.

Within its focus on primary airports, easyJet's new boss has hopes of one day operating out of the most primary of them all: "I'd be very interested in doing Heathrow," he revealed. "It'll be about the economics that Heathrow put in terms of airport fees."

"Today, we couldn't do it for the same reason that we can't do Zurich. Every year, we could probably base two aircraft [at Heathrow] if we wanted to, but it will cost so much in marketing to let that community know that you've got two aircraft there and that wouldn't work. It would also be so easy for BA, with as many aircraft as they've got, to just sit on your routes and know that you couldn't grow even if you wanted."

Jarvis said easyJet could offer the hub true low-cost travel, "because Heathrow doesn't have any low-cost airlines". With a third runway now looking more likely, the additional capacity required to facilitate easyJet's entry at the hub and the growth of a sustainable operation could be closer than previously thought.

Italy has been a more immediate focus. On March 30, easyJet opened new bases at Rome/Fiumicino (three aircraft) and Milan/Linate (five aircraft) after securing remedy slots following Lufthansa Group's acquisition of ITA Airways. Despite being "delighted" to secure the slots at the two airports, it hasn't been plain sailing: "The pain in Fiumicino and Linate was the length of time it took the competition authority to agree," he explained. "We'd have loved to have had the flights on sale from [September 1, 2024] or earlier, but it took a long time to complete and we weren't allowed to put them on sale until it had been completed and the remedy routes had been agreed by the European Commission and that left us a really short selling window."

Jarvis described the progress seen in its Italian expansion this year as an "investment", but with a 12-month run at it, things should be much more positive in future years. He also said that once easyJet is no longer obligated to operate the remedy routes, he would be keen to keep the successful routes going, but "remix it a bit to be more complimentary to the existing network."

KLM
PH-HXC
KLM

RIGHT: ***EasyJet mainly competes with legacy carriers such as KLM, given its preference for primary airports***
AMSTERDAM AIRPORT SCHIPHOL

easyJet
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easyJet
easyJet

BELOW: ***The operator's current fleet totals 356 aircraft including 82 A319s, 180 A320-200s, 75 A320neos, and 19 A321neos***
EASYJET

Consolidation

In its 30 years, easyJet has occasionally grown through acquisitions – GB Airways (2008), Go Fly (2002) and TEA Switzerland (acquired a 40% stake in 1998) – but Jarvis downplays any near-term appetite for takeovers. Instead, he hopes to benefit from wider industry consolidation by inheriting valuable airport slots and market access as a 'remedy partner'.

Air France-KLM's move to become a majority shareholder in SAS Scandinavian Airlines is already on easyJet's radar: "If Air France-KLM end up completing [its acquisition of SAS] and are asked to give up slots in Paris/Orly, we will be really interested in those slots," said Jarvis. "While not

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easyJet

BELOW: ***In December 2023, the carrier placed an order with Airbus for 157 additional A320neo Family aircraft comprising 56 A320neos and 101 A321neos***
AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/ ALEX PEAKE

ABOVE: ***The airline expects to retire its fleet of 82 smaller A319s over the next five years, subject to Airbus delivery timelines*** VINCENZO PACE

wanting to buy SAS, we will be part of that consolidation play in a way, in that the flag [carriers] would probably come to us and say, 'Can you complete our offer to the European Commission by being a remedy partner'."

The LCC boss said he sees a long-term future with the three flag carrier groups of IAG, Lufthansa and Air France-KLM and then a trio of large low-cost carriers made up of easyJet, Ryanair and Wizz Air.

The easyJet CEO believes that while mergers and acquisitions will continue to fuel consolidation among European legacy carriers, failures will likely drive most of the change among the region's low-cost airlines.

"I think some of the smaller, low-cost carriers may struggle – airlines like Volotea are struggling so let's see what happens there. Norwegian struggled and then came back," he said.

While low-cost rivals like Volotea and Wizz Air face headwinds, Jarvis said easyJet would only explore opportunities that made economic sense: "Volotea, their average fleet is almost 20 years old, so there's nothing to buy. With Wizz, they don't own any aircraft, so it'd be more what would need to happen, it would be conversations with lessors, because everything they have is leased."

In its 2025 annual report, Wizz Air said it "leases most of its aircraft and spare engines". According to ch-aviation data, out of 240 aircraft in Wizz Air's fleet, 227 are leased, with the remaining 13 on financial leases.

Fleet focus

For its part, out of the 356 aircraft in the fleet, easyJet owns 210, putting the owned-to-leased ratio at approximately 59%, ch-aviation data reveals. As of September 2025, the all-Airbus roster comprises 82 A319s, 180 A320-200s, 75 A320neos, and 19 A321neos. The UK arm of the group operates the largest contingent with 190 jets, followed by easyJet Europe with 135 and easyJet Switzerland with 31.

In December 2023, the carrier placed an order with Airbus for 157 additional A320neo Family aircraft comprising 56 A320neos and 101 A321neos. According to the manufacturer's July 2025 orders and deliveries data, easyJet's current order backlog comprises 125 A320neos and 165 A321neos. Jarvis said the carrier's orderbook extends to approximately 2034.

"The strategic focus is to grow modestly by about 5% in terms of seat capacity per annum," the CEO said. "That's what we've stated to the market and we'll re-fleet our older A319s so we don't intend to take them through a second engine shop visit, we've got 82 of those, but we've got the orderbook to do that."

He is unconvinced by the trend of long-range narrowbodies: "[The A321XLR] doesn't really do anything useful [for us]. I wouldn't have easyJet going to New York because we have no distribution the other side and the partnerships wouldn't let you in. That's why Norwegian tried and failed, and shrank back to medium-haul." Jarvis said the capability of the standard A321neo was more than enough to fly to destinations including Cape Verde, Tunisia, Marrakesh and Egypt.

Wizz Air notably took delivery of its first A321XLR in May (see *Airliner World* August 2025) and has since accepted another example. In July, it announced the closure of its Wizz Air Abu Dhabi subsidiary. Asked what he thinks of his competitor's decision to add the long-range narrowbody, Jarvis said: "I think they were thinking Abu Dhabi and beyond so I don't know now what they're thinking [now], because I don't think they've got the traffic rights to go to India, so I don't know what they're going to use it for."

BELOW: ***Jarvis remains unconvinced by the long-range A321XLR and questions rival Wizz Air's intentions with the type now that its Abu Dhabi base is expected to close*** KEY-ROBERT VEITCH

1st A321XLR

ABOVE: ***The easyJet boss said that the COMAC C919 could be considered during its next aircraft campaign***
AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/WEIMENG

Indeed, it appears Wizz has come to the same conclusion because it was subsequently announced that its order for 47 XLRs was to be slashed to just ten to 15 aircraft.

COMAC considerations

The easyJet fleet has been firmly Airbus since the departure of its last Boeing 737 in 2011, but Jarvis revealed to *Airliner World* that he could consider a new entrant – China's COMAC C919: "If the COMAC comes along one day, we'd have to see the economics. It's not certified, but we don't need an aircraft until 2034 so I think if we're doing another campaign in three years, there may be three people to talk to."

Jarvis joins Ryanair Group's CEO Michael O'Leary who in March also expressed an interest in acquiring the Chinese-built airliner.

"If the comfort, safety and reliability are there, and it's cheaper, then I think it will start winning customers," he said. "I think it's fundamentally an Airbus isn't it?" The C919 uses a significant number of components supplied by western OEMs including most notably the engines, which are CFM International LEAP-1Cs; variants of which, the LEAP-1A and LEAP-1B, can be found on Airbus A320neo and Boeing 737 MAX aircraft.

"I'm pretty sure they just stripped down an Airbus and rebuilt it," he joked. "It would be down to price, but if they're selling them ten million cheaper, then people will start moving to them."

Holiday foray

Perhaps easyJet's biggest disruption since its founding has been its entry into the holiday market. EasyJet Holidays, launched in November 2019, bundles flights, hotels and transfers – and now contributes almost a third of the group profits. In 2024, it generated £190m before tax, and this year is forecast to reach £235m.

"The first five years we set about disrupting travel and making it affordable for many more people," Jarvis said. "In the last five years, [we've] set about disrupting the holiday industry, and have gone from zero to a 10% market share of UK holidays in no time."

Jarvis said the aim with easyJet Holidays was to "get a larger share of the customer's wallet because the customer is spending the money anyway." He said that with a reduced marketing spend – owing to the company's already vast presence in the travel market and its popular website – a lower price can be offered.

In its investor presentations, easyJet clearly sees Jet2 – with its 20% UK market share – as a rival it wants to challenge. The Leeds-based airline is a giant in the British holiday market and boasts an airline operation which sees 70% of the people flying with it also booking a package holiday. Asked whether he wants easyJet to reach these numbers, Jarvis said: "No, I wouldn't like to see 70% attachment rate, and we never will, because we're not going to sell holidays to domestic customers [for example].

"Our aspirations aren't capped by the size of the flying programme. They're not capped by needing to change the way the airline thinks about it. It's just asking more people on that flight to spend their accommodation money with us."

A benefit of having the holiday division is increasing the profitability of the airline during the winter season. The airline usually loses money in Q1 and Q2 – which runs from October to December and January to March, respectively. Jarvis said that depending on the scale, easyJet Holidays could allow for near-year-round profitability. The only exception would be Q2, during which aircraft maintenance, marketing and crew training takes place – which weighs on the balance sheet.

Looking ahead

As easyJet celebrates 30 years, Jarvis is both reflective and ambitious: "It's a real privilege to run easyJet," he enthused. "The biggest reason is its clear purpose, and I think as long as we retain truth to that purpose this is probably what easyJet will look like in 30 years' time – an airline there to give great, affordable fares and make it easy and accessible for as many people as possible." AW

BELOW: ***The airline launched easyJet Holidays in November 2019***
AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/DAVE STURGES

Jane Boulton became the star of easyJet's reality TV show Airline *with her no-nonsense approach to dealing with problem passengers* ITV

"It's an aircraft, not a bus"

In January 1999, easyJet became the focus of the ITV reality series *Airline*, a warts-and-all look at the airline's operation. **Lee Cross** spoke to one of the show's biggest stars, **Jane Boulton**, about the highs and lows of one of the UK's best-loved TV shows

ABOVE: *Jane with some of her co-stars from the* Airline *series* ITV

They say that all publicity is good publicity. This was never truer than when easyJet became the featured airline in ITV's behind-the-scenes show *Airline*. Stelios Haji-Ioannou was approached in 1998 with a view to featuring his up-and-coming airline, after an earlier series had covered Britannia Airways, but had failed to set the ratings alight. ITV had heard about the easyJet founder's colourful publicity stunts and knew that this irreverent attitude would play well on screen.

The show proved a hit, regularly pulling in some ten million viewers each week. At the height of its popularity during the fourth series, which aired in 2000, some 40% of the British viewing public tuned in, attracting twice as many viewers as the new series of *Friends*. Indeed, over the ten series that ran between 1997 and 2007, *Airline* became ITV's most popular factual programme, topping 75 million viewers worldwide.

For several weeks, it became the third most-watched programme in the UK behind soap operas *EastEnders* and *Coronation Street*. Indeed, its own soap-like storylines continued to pull in viewers, with the show's main cast of Jane Boulton, Leanne Cheung, Katrina Leeder and Leo Jones going through break-ups, breakdowns and even a cancer storyline. *Airline* covered it all, from distressed passengers who had missed their flights taking their frustrations out on easyJet staff, to following Haji-Ioannou to the Boeing factory in Seattle, where he kicked the tyres on his brand-new 737s.

One of the standout stars of the series was Jane Boulton. Her no-nonsense approach to dealing with troublesome passengers, combined with her caring nature, led her to become a TV and aviation icon.

Airliner World: **Tell us about how your starring role in *Airline* came about?**
Jane Boulton: I had worked for easyJet for around a year before the TV show came out. I turned up for work one day and someone from easyJet's head office came over and said that Stelios had been talking to ITV about doing a TV show called *Airline*, and they wanted to follow someone on the front line. They asked if I wanted to do it.

Initially, they told me that it would just be for a few days and I said "Yeah, no problem." Of course, it wasn't just a few days – the crew ended up being with me for about three or four years in the end. The cameras were there every shift. We worked six on, six off, early and late, 12-hour shifts, and they were there all the time.

ALW: **How did you feel about a lot of the content that was aired being about the passengers who had issues, rather than focusing on the positive customer service side of your role?**
JB: People would always say to me "How can so many people miss their flights?" But the shows were 30 minutes per episode. To get these episodes, they used to follow us around for a whole year. Also, with some of the situations within the episode, we may have been with those passengers for a good few hours, dealing with whatever problem had arisen and calming them down. But that side didn't make good television and the producers cut it. They had to be edited down, which made it appear as though it was over as quickly as it had started.

The majority of the time, you forgot that the cameras were there, although occasionally, their presence would make the situation worse, as some

BELOW: *When the show aired on a Friday evening, the call centre booking line would light up throughout the 30-minute episode with people looking to book flights* EASYJET

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ABOVE: *Jane said she loved working for the airline and being part of the big orange family* ITV

people played up to the cameras. Then, if the passengers were irate, they would get right up into their faces, which would sometimes antagonise them more.

A lot of people think it was staged or scripted, but it wasn't. One of the runners on the show said "Can't you get someone to swear at you on camera?" and I just said "No, I can't. This is my job."

I found it all quite shocking at first. I felt like it showed a side of me that wasn't me at all. Thankfully, I've never received any negative comments. I think people just realised that I was just being honest and doing my job.

***ALW:* The show was a huge hit. How did you handle the fame that came with the programme?**

JB: It was strange, but it became semi-normal in the end. Even though it really wasn't normal, seeing your face in the TV magazines and people following you round the supermarket or recognising you in the street.

I've got an identical twin sister and she would get stared at all the time. People would approach her, thinking it was me, and she'd say "No, that's my twin sister, Jane", but they wouldn't believe her.

I even had someone get their child to look under the toilet stall once to see if it was me! Madness!

***ALW:* Did it ever get too much for you?**

JB: There was one incident that was televised, where I had been having an issue with a passenger and I pushed the camera away and said "Enough." That was hard. I couldn't get out of the situation because I was pressed against the check-in desk. I had the passenger on one side and the camera crew on the other, and that was a challenging situation. I know they wanted that on TV, but their being there just escalated it. The stress did sometimes get to you.

***ALW:* How heavily involved was Stelios and what was he like?**

JB: Stelios was wonderful – a lovely, kind, generous man. He had time for everyone, remembered everyone's names and was always willing to roll up his sleeves and get involved. Although that was sometimes more of a hindrance, as it led to him making promises we couldn't deliver on. But he was trying to help.

The show did exactly what he wanted it to do. When the show used to air on a Friday night, the phones at the call centre would not stop ringing. They had a cut-off at 99 calls waiting for the entire programme being on air. For some time after it had finished, the number of calls stayed at that 99 mark.

***ALW:* What were the worst and best routes to handle and why?**

JB: When I worked on check-in, I loved to have a bit of banter with the passengers. It made the shift go quicker. In the early days, easyJet used to operate a route between Luton and Liverpool, and they were always my favourite. If it was delayed, it was never an issue. They'd go and get another drink in the pub.

The worst route would probably be Nice. There was always some issue with that flight.

***ALW:* Tell us about your best and worst moments?**

JB: My best moments were always helping the elderly passengers or those travelling with kids, the ones that really needed your help, and you may have only done something tiny, but it meant so much to them.

Worst moments, much like the best moments – a lot of it happened off-camera. There was one particular scenario where I delayed a departure because we had passengers coming in off another flight who had said they were going to a funeral. I got into trouble for holding the flight and when the TV crew came back, we found out that they weren't actually going to a funeral at all. That puts your trust out for other people.

***ALW:* If you could go back and do it all again, would you do anything differently?**

JB: I'd go back tomorrow. I really miss it. But I don't think I would have done anything differently, really. Maybe I would have been a little more aware of what was happening. But then what you saw on TV was what you get from me.

***ALW:* Why do you think easyJet has been such a success and is still around after 30 years?**

JB: For me, it's still a great low-cost airline. The people there are fantastic – the orange spirit and the orange family that you become part of. I've never had that at any other company. There's nothing like it. The culture there is second to none. They recognise that the customer-facing people are the ones who keep the business going.

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ABOVE: ***"We have to keep that orange spirit, that's the reason people fly with us"*** ALL IMAGES EASYJET UNLESS STATED

"When I was a young boy, I remember travelling to Canada to see an aunt and an uncle, and I got on this airplane thinking 'wow – I want to do something that involves airplanes'. I wasn't sure what it was, but I just fell in love with aviation, and it's always been in my blood," recalled Michael Brown, easyJet's director of cabin services.

After a brief stint in the hotel industry, Michael worked as cabin crew for British Midland and British Airways, spending several years at the latter in customer training. "I took redundancy from BA and was scratching my head, then an opportunity came up at easyJet in 2002, in training. Through my career here, I've worked all of the roles in cabin services," he explained. Though a director, he still occasionally flies as cabin crew "just to understand and see what's going on, and see my colleagues face to face."

Having been head of crew management and operations from 2002, Michael moved to his new post in November 2022. "It's been an amazing opportunity, being able to enact some of those changes to make sure we keep up with the times, that we're competitive, to make sure we still deliver the warmest welcome in the sky."

For Michael, the transition was quite straightforward although he quipped: "When you get to the top, there's nobody else you can blame; the buck stops with you! I had an amazing mentor in my previous boss, and I still talk to her, but also I have an amazing team that sits under me, so it was a natural transition. Evolution not revolution."

That team comprises 10,750 cabin crew, representing 75 nationalities, based in eight countries. "But challenge brings opportunities," said Michael, who added that some challenges are more significant than others. "Before Brexit crew could fly from any destination, any base, and that doesn't happen anymore, so we have crew on a UK AOC, European AOC, and our Swiss airline. We have to keep that 'orange spirit', that's the reason people fly with us. But there's nuance; if you fly from Basel or Barcelona, the crew will put the Swiss or Spanish touch on it. They're required to speak their own language and English but some will have badges with six, seven or eight, including sign language. Our demographic is not just Brits of a certain age – we carry 90 million people a year, 250,000 people a day."

Recalling his early days, Michael said: "I joined easyJet when it was very small, probably 17 aircraft. I was based at Gatwick – two aircraft – and everybody was telling me, 'You're crazy to join, it'll never last'. And now at Gatwick we're the biggest airline, 80-plus aircraft."

With 31 bases, soon to be 32 when Newcastle opens next year, the airline operates around 2,000 flights every day, across a network of approximately 1,000 routes. "We've got something in our DNA, in our core; we talk

Working the aisle

Robert Veitch speaks to **Michael Brown**, easyJet's director of cabin services, and learns how customer service has evolved through the lifetime of the airline

easyJet
CABIN
SERV

RIGHT: *Michael Brown, easyJet's director of cabin services*

about the easyJet spirit, and there's something really special about this place – I feel very fortunate."

Changing times

Comparing buy-on-board from its genesis days to the present highlights the evolution. "When we started, we called it 'easyJet Bistro'; we used to go through with a small half-cart, take cash, have to add it all up in our heads or use a calculator. The first few customers paid with £20 notes, and you ran out of change straight away. We now have EPOS [electronic point of sale] devices; it's all card transactions. We sell a product every two seconds now, that's the difference.

"In the old days when you took off, the crew would count everything in the bar to make sure the stock matched what came out of the bonding stores, and at the end of flight you'd have to count it all again. It was a really arduous task, whereas now it's all electronic, on a device; it'll tell you exactly what's there, your opening stock, closing stock, how much you've sold and how much you should have on your credit card reconciliation."

The airline is in the early stages of pre-order for passengers who would like to request a hot meal or sandwich on board. With EPOS data acquisition, buy-on-board service has become very focused. Michael explained: "We're very dynamic in the bars we've got on specific routes, some will stay on for two, three, or four flights, but others, they'll go to Tenerife and back, and we'll put a brand-new bar on. What we're seeing with Cape Verde is a high demand for more hot foods, so we've adapted and put on additional hot foods, things like chicken kormas and pastas."

More recently machine learning has been used alongside EPOS data for dynamic loading. "We use AI to see where we've got sales, where we've got wastages. Loading the morning fresh food, the flight will go out and

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BELOW: *Michael's team comprises 10,750 cabin crew, representing 75 nationalities, based in eight countries*

ABOVE: ***Newcastle will become the airline's 32nd base when it re-opens in 2026***

LEFT: ***The visibility of older cabin crew has become apparent by their volume rather than their incongruity***

back, and then in the afternoon we'll load fresh again, and anything that hasn't been sold will come off. There's some dynamic pricing for end of day sales, some reduction so the crew can sell a discounted price. Things like AI have helped us make sure the load is correct, make sure we get the right amount of cheese and ham toasties on a specific route. There's no perfect solution, because the profile does and will change depending on the day of the week or the time of the year."

Currently, the airline can't transmit live updates to the ground to improve the catering experience further, but trials have been done on Air-Fi in Switzerland. "That's our aspiration, to get to a place where it's in-time reporting, to understand whether we need additional stock at a certain point of the day – that's something we've been looking at. But at the moment, it's historical data using AI to tell us. On 'the Tenerife out of Luton' on a Monday morning this is what you need, on a 'Fuerteventura out of Gatwick' on a Thursday evening it's this." Harking back to the old days with a chuckle, he quipped: "We didn't even do fresh food, it was tea and coffee, a KitKat, and maybe one of those blueberry muffins that lasted 28 days and didn't taste anything like blueberries."

Although Wi-Fi installation has been investigated, with average flights being just under two hours, there isn't huge demand from customers. Michael explained: "We've done some trials where we have Air-Fi, and somebody can order [onboard] from their phone," he said. "We have to go back and look at the data, understand it – is it right for us longer term, or is there another solution?"

On the ground, AI is used in the Crisis Management Centre (CMC) and Integrated Control Centre (ICC) during periods of disruption to help allocate aircraft, a contrast to the old method of a few staff with years of experience in the field racking their brains to recall a previous similar situation.

Boarding and seating

As the airline grew, so did capacity – from 148/149 seats on the Boeing 737-300s, through to 156 on the Airbus A319s, to 180/186 on the A320 and 235 on the A321. Michael noted: "One of the reasons we bought in the Airbus is because it's got a wider aisle than the Boeing, so it does allow for quicker boarding."

Despite the current trend to board with more carry-on baggage, impacting turn-time, and ground staff focussed on checking certain ticket bundles, over the last six months, time has been shaved off turnaround time. "Probably more of us now have quicker boarding than we have for a long, long time in our history," Michael said.

Before the introduction of paid for, pre-assigned seating in November 2012, boarding was always something of a scramble. With some airlines, randomly allocated seating at check-in is exactly that, while easyJet employ an algorithm, sitting people together 99.9% of the time. Michael was keen to stress: "In the same booking, the intention is always to put people together. That 0.1%, the crew may have to get involved, but we'll never split families up. The reason people might want to select a seat is for reassurance, either a window or an aisle seat; it's all about choice."

Generation X

In recent years the presence of older cabin crew has become apparent by their numbers rather than their incongruity, as Michael noted: "We've got brilliant people in their 20s and their 70s – they're energetic and love the job."

EasyJet's 'over 50 campaign', which began in 2022, was designed to

BELOW: ***"I'm really proud of the fact that we've got a great mix of people, and we employ people that really want to be here – age isn't a barrier"***

ABOVE: ***Digital payments, EPOS data, and dynamic loading mean working the aisle has become much easier for cabin crew***

appeal to people returning to work after having a family, or who wanted to be cabin crew, but were under the impression it was only for women in their 20s. Michael said: "We've done empty nesters, 'returnships', and 10% of people that joined us this year were over 50. You can be of any age, any background. Want to do some travel and have some great perks and benefits? Then we'd love you to come and work for us."

The depth of life experience from older people combined with the youth and energy of younger recruits has given positive results in the airline's customer scores. "We're doing really well with our onboard CSAT (customer satisfaction)," said Michael. "I'm really proud of the fact that we've got a great mix of people, and we employ people that really want to be here – age isn't a barrier."

Michael was keen to highlight the variability in working hours and that easyJet was the first airline to offer part-time hours from day one "People say I want to work 50% or 75%, or two or three days a week. We have people in their 20s and 70s, that work full or part time. It can be flexible, two weeks on, two off. There's a great range of roster types and within the rostering system, the crew have the ability to bid for earlies or lates, longer or shorter flights – it's down to the individual. Some people like random rostering, they get what they get and they're happy with that. Others will be quite explicit, [for example] 'I want to make sure that I finish by three o'clock because I have to go and pick the kids up', so they'll always do earlies."

Michael explained that cabin crew diversification was never a target, instead it was an aspiration – to give people the best choices. "I want people to love their job, but also love their home life and what they do outside of work. And I think when you give people those choices, they give the very best when they're on board the aircraft."

Blackpool rock

At every base easyJet has culture ambassadors comprising cabin crew and pilots, people it says help shape what happens. In 2024 the airline organised 500 events attended by thousands of staff, and each year presents its Spirit Awards where 500 of the best people from the 13,000 employees are brought together for greater recognition.

Looking back over his time, Michael said he remains proud of one thing he believes has never changed: "Our culture – if we cut, we bleed orange. We deliver the warmest welcome in the sky. We talk about this big orange family, that's one thing that's a constant, and I hope that never changes." **AW**

BELOW: ***The airline has provided an avenue of employment for people in search of a flexible career change***

When Michael Brown joined, the Boeing 737-300 and -700 were the mainstays of the fleet, as typified here by G-EZKD (c/n 32425), a -700 which was with the airline from 2004 to 2011 KEY-RICHARD MASLEN

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Striving for sustainability

Lahiru Ranasinghe, easyJet's director of sustainability, speaks to **Robert Veitch** about the airline's ambitious mission to achieve net zero by 2050

LEFT: *Lahiru Ranasinghe, easyJet's director of sustainability*
ALL IMAGES EASYJET UNLESS STATED

Lahiru Ranasinghe holds a master's degree in aeronautical engineering and began his career as an engineer at Airbus, before stints in commercial and strategy roles at British Airways and Virgin Atlantic, joining easyJet in 2019 as a senior strategy manager. He moved to the sustainability team in 2022 as head of net zero, creating the airline's net zero strategy, and began his current role as director of sustainability on January 1, 2025.

Airliner World (AW): **In broad terms, what is easyJet's path to net zero carbon emissions?**
Lahiru Ranasinghe (LR): We say: 'reduce, replace, remove'. 'Reduce' is efficiencies – new aircraft, operational efficiencies within our control, and airspace modernisation. We've done our own pretty sophisticated analysis that indicates there's a 10% inefficiency to be removed. We've identified hotspots, specific airports or parts of the sectors that are particularly problematic in terms of the inefficiency they cause. If airport X has an inefficient departure pattern and that gives you 0.1%, it's those incremental gains that deliver the overall benefit. 'Replace' is shifting from fossil fuels to SAF [sustainable aviation fuel] and in the longer term, hydrogen. 'Remove' is what you've got left, because with the best will in the world, this industry is not going to get to zero carbon emissions by 2050, so carbon removals will play a play a significant role in any aviation pathway.

AW: **What have been your priorities in the first few months?**
LR: We've got a strategy we're happy with – it's all about delivery. The big focus is embedding sustainability across the rest of the business, because ultimately what good looks like in my view, is that sustainability becomes like safety – centrally managed but everyone is involved in a way that's appropriate to their job. One of the big priorities, over the next few years, is to build that capability and engagement right across the business so that everyone is getting stuck in.

AW: **What have you initiated recently?**
LR: We've been trialling lightweight paint that, when applied, saves around 27kg per aircraft. We've got high-tech software like descent profile optimisation and continuous descent approach – making sure we can land at an optimised thrust setting. And standard things like single-engine taxi and engine washing, which are a bit more 'agricultural', but need doing. The general tendency is to think of sustainability as an extra or a cost, but the fundamental principle of it is minimising waste and energy use. And that is directly linked with operational benefits to the company.

AW: **Will hydrogen be the fuel of the future?**
LR: It's the fuel that has the highest potential but we think of 2050 almost like the Y2K bug – time stops at 2050. Hydrogen holds the most potential to be a zero carbon fuel; hypothetically if we got the first hydrogen aircraft tomorrow for an airline our size, it would take the best part of 25 years to replace the entire fleet... which is 2050. And even if everything works

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BELOW: *Currently 94 of the airline's 356 aircraft are new engine options (NEOs), including A320neo, G-UZHC (c/n 7802), which was delivered in November 2017*
MARTIN NEEDHAM

ABOVE: ***High-tech software, such as descent profile optimisation and continuous descent approaches, help reduce in-flight fuel consumption***

out as well as it can, we'd still have to remove some of those emissions through carbon removal.

AW: **Aviation is seen as a bad actor in terms of emissions, how do other industries compare?**
LR: Aviation emissions contribute to climate change and we need to find ways to tackle this. However, in comparing this sector to the global cattle industry – dairy and beef – the estimates are the greenhouse gas impact is about five times that of aviation. It takes quite a lot of imagination to draw a line from your milkshake to deforestation of the Amazon, but if you look at a plane it takes less imagination to perceive the impact. Because of that, a lot of people are often surprised when they hear aviation is only around 3% of global carbon emissions.

AW: **Can you explain the three types of SAF?**
LR: What we have mostly is first generation SAF, that's HEFA (hydrotreated esters and fatty acids), which is essentially used cooking oil – chip fat turned into aviation fuel. That's a tried and tested process; there's production at scale, but only so much waste oil products in the world to make that fuel. There needs to be a scale up of second generation SAF, which is made from other waste feedstock; municipal solid waste, black bin bag waste, or agricultural waste and so on. Ultimately, third generation is power to liquid, using renewable electricity to produce hydrogen and carbon, and put those together to form a fuel. Those are nascent technologies being developed, but we need to move to the scale that makes it possible to decarbonise aviation.

AW: **What are the SAF mandates the industry is facing and what is the point of them?**
LR: The purpose has been to create demand certainty, so we're aiming to abide by those mandates, provided SAF is readily available. We're already subject to that for departures from the UK and EU as 2% of our fuel uplift is SAF. It scales up pretty aggressively – to 10% in the UK and 6% in the EU in 2030 – and it keeps scaling up from that point. The challenges in the SAF production industry are to bridge the gaps between first, second and third generation SAFs.

AW: **How can SAF production be scaled up to oil refinery level?**
LR: There's this transition period which is quite tricky to navigate and that's where the challenge is right now. There is also the very real fact of SAF being [approximately three times] more expensive than kerosene, and our whole purpose in 30 years of existence has been to make flying affordable; keep flying democratic. The EU and the EU ETS [European Union Emissions Trading System], and the recycling of ETS revenues, that's quite an elegant solution, because airlines are paying in the region of about €4bn a year in total. This is the total EU ETS, which goes into a pot, but some of that pot is recycled through incentives such as bringing down the cost of SAF. We don't have that same thing in the UK yet, but naturally, it's something we keep calling for. Any fuel we buy in Europe

The roadmap to net zero

The airline's sustainability strategy follows a Reduce, Replace, Remove framework. To reduce emissions, it is renewing its fleet with fuel-efficient, quieter A320neo Family aircraft, adopting operational efficiencies like engine washing, single-engine taxiing and Descent Profile Optimisation software, and promoting airspace modernisation with satellite-based systems. To replace fossil fuels, it is scaling up SAF use, investing in hydrogen-powered engine research with Rolls-Royce, and trialling hydrogen refuelling at airports. To remove remaining carbon emissions, the airline has partnered with Airbus and 1PointFive on direct air carbon capture and storage, becoming the first carrier to commit to this technology in 2023.

benefits from it, fuel that we buy in the UK does not, so care has to be taken on a governmental level, to ensure that there isn't any competitive distortion as well.

AW: **How much more SAF cost can the airline absorb?**
LR: If you look at our 2024 results, we made £6.08 of profit per passenger, so there's not a massive buffer to absorb further costs.

AW: **Across aviation, do you find similar mindsets?**
LR: Generally speaking, the airline world gets it. ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) has made that commitment on behalf of the airline world of hitting net zero by 2050. In the UK and Europe, we are operating in the most environmentally conscious and most highly environmentally regulated part of the world, because for intra-EU flying we're paying in the region of €80 per tonnes of carbon, 3.115 tonnes of CO_2 for a tonne of fuel burn. The best part of €300 of tax on top of the cost of fuel, so we are quite sensitive to that. It's fair to say the rest of the world isn't quite where the UK and Europe are. The direction of travel is very clear and this is not the risk companies are accustomed to; we're accustomed to shock and recovery risks. This is a 'frog in a saucepan' risk where you need to make sure your company is building towards that more sustainable future, because if you try to be reactive there's a significant risk you'll be too late.

AW: **Do you find many alliances across the sector?**
LR: There's a lot of collaboration. For example, Sustainable Aviation UK, which has players from across the value chain, including a number of airlines. We are part of Project SkyPower in the EU; there are 15 main companies, three of which are airlines, and the goal is to unlock the production of third generation SAF in the EU. You've got the whole value chain, from financiers to producers to end users, trying to identify where the gaps are, where market failures are, and get that production and the buying up and running. There is a huge amount of collaborative work across the industry and beyond to try and solve this issue – it is entire ecosystem change we're looking at.

AW: **According to its own roadmap is easyJet on target?**
LR: The roadmap is a continuously evolving beast, because looking 25 to 30 years ahead, naturally, you've got to adapt it for major changes like a fleet order. We track our performance against the curve that we have to hit, and up to 2024 we're ahead of the curve, and that's against the headwinds of some fleet delays and airspace congestion, and so on. A big part of that is because we have delivered quite strongly against the operational efficiency initiatives; the stuff that's within our control.

AW: **Will the roadmap adapt to the contours of the landscape as you travel down it?**
LR: Absolutely – reduce, replace, remove… they build on each other like a pyramid. Fundamentally, we're trying to use as little energy as we possibly need to, because the best fuel, is the fuel you don't use. Behind the roadmap – because it's built bottom up – is something that looks a bit like the Grand Canyon, because you can see different layers as the levers get pulled at different times.

What is the EU ETS?

The EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) is the EU's main tool for cutting carbon emissions. It works on a "cap-and-trade" basis: airlines must hold a permit, called an allowance, for every tonne of CO_2 they release. Each year the total number of allowances is reduced, making it more expensive to pollute and encouraging airlines to fly more efficiently or invest in cleaner technology. Since 2012, flights within the European Economic Area have been included in the scheme, with revenues from auctions used to fund climate projects and support the shift towards more sustainable aviation and energy systems.

AW: **Is there a similarity with the race to the moon in the 1960s: JFK making the pledge, having to invent things they didn't know they needed from materials they didn't know existed?**
LR: It is, but it's doable and we are seeing collaboration across the industry that, at least from my perspective, is absolutely necessary to make it happen. Things can be done to make it easier, for example harmonising regulations – what qualifies as SAF, the mechanisms to reduce or manage the cost of SAF, the standards for green hydrogen going forwards. The more these things are standardised means we can move towards a functioning market faster, and that means you've got a global market. But it does need a bit of government intervention early on, to give it that nudge to get the wheels moving, so it has a chance of moving under its own steam. AW

BELOW: *Lightweight paint saves around 27kg per aircraft, an incremental gain the airline says will help deliver the overall benefit*

Breaking barriers

Robert Veitch sat down with **Hannah Wells** and **Nadia Ismail**, to hear how they found their way into the flight deck, the challenges and rewards of the job, and why inspiring the next generation of aviators remains so important

The flight deck of an Airbus A320 is a world away from the classrooms of Blackpool or the lecture theatres of Liverpool, yet it is here that training manager for pilot development Hannah Wells and second officer Nadia Ismail now spend much of their working lives. Both based at London/Gatwick, they represent a new generation of easyJet pilots – one forged through different pathways but united by a passion for flying. In a wide-ranging conversation, they shared their personal journeys, the realities of modern airline life, and the moments that still make them pause in wonder.

***Airliner World*: How did you both find your way into the cockpit at easyJet?**
Hannah Wells (HW): I've been with easyJet just over six years now, always based at Gatwick. Originally, I'm from Blackpool, but I love flying out of Gatwick because it's our biggest base with more than 70 aircraft. The variety is what makes it special: no two days are ever the same, whether it's the destination or the crew you're flying with.

I was fortunate to join through the Amy Johnson scholarship, which supported some of my type rating costs. That programme has since evolved into a broader focus on diversity and inclusion. We now take a much more sustainable approach by going into schools and inspiring children early, breaking down gender stereotypes. My favourite bit is turning up in normal clothes, letting the pupils guess my job, and then seeing their jaws drop when I tell them I'm a pilot. You can't be what you can't see – and showing them that women really do fly airliners is powerful.

Nadia Ismail (NI): I came to easyJet a different way. I studied Avionic Systems with Pilot Studies at the University of Liverpool, which gave me a strong grounding in aviation and engineering. I then began integrated ATPL training at FTE Jerez in Spain. My first airline unfortunately went bust, but I kept going, worked in operations for a year, and eventually secured my role at easyJet. I've now been here nearly two years and love it. Like Hannah, I'm based at Gatwick, and the variety of flying and people is second to none.

RIGHT: *Training manager for pilot development Hannah Wells (left) and second officer Nadia Ismail*
KEY-ROBERT VEITCH

BELOW: *The pair fly out of easyJet's largest base at London/Gatwick which has more than 70 aircraft*
GATWICK AIRPORT

***AW:* What does pilot training at easyJet involve?**

HW: We run a Multi-Pilot Licence (MPL) programme in partnership with CAE. It's designed for people starting with zero flying experience. Cadets spend ten months in ground school, then around 100 hours in light aircraft – often in Malaga or Phoenix – before moving into Airbus A320 simulators. They'll complete about 150 hours in the sim, three times the amount of a traditional type rating. That means by the time they touch a real Airbus, the procedures are second nature.

The first time cadets fly a real jet is during base training – an empty aircraft with five trainees and two training captains at a quiet airport such as Teesside or Prestwick. Each trainee does six take-offs and landings plus a go-around to validate their licence. The very next flight, they're carrying passengers, but with a highly experienced training captain and a safety pilot on the jump seat for the first 12 sectors. Safety is always our number one priority.

NI: Although I didn't take the MPL route myself, I see the benefit. It makes the cadets feel part of easyJet from day one. And because they're trained specifically for the Airbus

RIGHT: ***EasyJet have two fixed-base and eight full motion simulators at CAE Gatwick***
KEY-ROBERT VEITCH

A320
Your worldwide training partner of choice
easyJet
CAE

and our procedures, they integrate seamlessly once they join the line.

***AW:* Female pilots are still a minority in aviation. How is easyJet addressing this?**
HW: The industry average for female pilots is around 5%, but at easyJet we're currently at about 8% in the UK. On our MPL programme, 13% of cadets are women – and that number is rising thanks to our outreach. Going into schools is making a real difference. It's about visibility. I don't think I ever flew with a female crew before I became one.

And it's not just about numbers; it's about making the career accessible. EasyJet now offers part-time contracts, preference bidding for shifts, and flexibility around night stops. That helps pilots balance family life and makes aviation a realistic career path for everyone, men and women alike.

***AW:* With such a big network, do you have favourite destinations to fly to?**
HW: I can't choose just one! Innsbruck is incredible – flying down a valley with snow-covered mountains in winter or lush meadows in summer. It's breathtaking every time. Nice is another favourite. The approach is largely manual, the runways stretch into the sea, and the views of the promenade are stunning.
NI: For me, it's Funchal in Madeira – even though only captains can land there, it's fascinating to watch. The training and skill required are amazing. My personal favourite to fly into is Olbia in Sardinia. I usually preference late flights, so I often arrive at sunset with the light reflecting off the sea. It's tranquil, beautiful, and reminds me exactly why I wanted to be a pilot.

***AW:* Have you had any standout experiences so far?**
HW: A few years ago, I flew one of easyJet's special Northern Lights charity flights. We took off from Gatwick, flew to 62 degrees north, held for 40 minutes so passengers could watch the aurora, and then returned. It was logistically unusual – not a normal out-and-back – but unforgettable. We had a musician performing on board and scientists explaining the lights. And we were

ABOVE: ***The industry average for female pilots is around 5%, but at easyJet this number is around 8% in the UK*** EASYJET

BELOW: ***One of Hannah's favourite destinations is Innsbruck*** AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/ THEO SCHRÖCKER

easyJet
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easyJet

ABOVE: ***Nadia's favourite airport is Funchal in Madeira – even though only captains can land there, she said it's fascinating to watch*** AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/ RUI ALVES

Flying the simulator

So... what's it like to fly the A320neo simulator under the tutelage of Hannah, and with Nadia avidly watching from the jump seat?

EasyJet have two fixed-base and eight full motion simulators at CAE Gatwick and after the safety demonstration, we prepared for a training exercise which would involve a departure, escape manoeuvre and landing.

After a run through, it was time to turn on the motion setting and spool up the engines, first to 50% and then full power, focusing on the far end of runway 26L at Gatwick when using the rudder, and rotating the aircraft gradually to 15° as instructed. With a positive rate of climb, Hannah raised the gear and we reduced the power and cruised at 5,000ft towards central London and The Shard.

With the crowded airspace in London, it provided an opportunity to showcase the simulator and the A320neo, when the 'traffic' warning went off in the cockpit. Hannah asked me to maximise the engine thrust and the rate of climb to escape the nearby aircraft. Hannah pointed out the A320 pitch rate is restricted to 20° to prevent a stall, and the effect of the motion in the cockpit was quite pronounced.

Finally, the simulator was reset, three miles out from 26L at Gatwick and thankfully with the wind turned off. Nonetheless, for the novice it's still quite a challenge and as the descent progressed and the altitude callouts began, I could sense the airspace in my brain becoming a little more crowded. But with Hannah's excellent, calm tuition, the aircraft landed smoothly, straight, and where it should have touched down. It felt a little heavy, but both Hannah and Nadia assured me that was better that gliding halfway down the runway and landing long.

RIGHT: ***The pair said you don't need a degree or flying experience to pursue a career as a pilot, just five GCSEs including maths, English and a science*** AIRBUS/H GOUSSE/MASTER FILMS

lucky: the aurora appeared on the horizon. It was magical.

NI: For me, it was my first landing back at Birmingham, my home city, with my mum watching from the runway threshold. I even flew directly over my house on approach. Seeing her waving in her green coat while I landed the aircraft was surreal. All the years of training came together in that one moment.

AW: What about the tougher side of the job – any challenges?

NI: Aviation always throws up challenges – weather, air traffic control delays, the unexpected. But we're trained for that. EasyJet emphasises pilot competencies rather than just scenarios, so we're equipped to deal with whatever comes. Personally, I've been lucky so far, though I'm sure there will be trickier days ahead.

HW: Exactly. Our recurrent training every six months is about practising non-normal procedures in the simulator. You can't rehearse an engine failure or a tricky diversion with passengers on board, but you can in the sim. That constant preparation means we're ready for the real thing.

AW: Flying sounds demanding. How do you balance it with life outside the cockpit?

HW: I'm on maternity cover for someone at the moment, so I split my time 50/50 between flying and office work with cadets. That variety keeps the passion alive. For pilots returning from maternity leave or medical absence, easyJet offers tailored return-to-work packages with simulator refreshers and line training before going solo again. It's a supportive system.

easyJet
G-UZMA
A321
NEO

ABOVE: ***EasyJet is currently going through a fleet transition from A320ceo Family aircraft to the neo*** GATWICK AIRPORT

NI: Flexibility is key. I compose and play piano in my spare time, and I've even performed on *The Piano* on Channel 4. Honestly, that was more nerve-wracking than my first take-off! But the two balance each other. Flying is methodical, following SOPs [Standard Operating Procedures]; music is creative, but still structured. They complement one another perfectly.

AW: What would you say to someone considering a career as a pilot?

HW: Don't be put off by misconceptions. You don't need a degree, just five GCSEs including maths, English and a science. You don't need flying experience – we train people from zero hours. But you do need passion and commitment. Try a flight in a light aircraft first, make sure you love it, then go for it.

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Come on, let's fly!

Lee Cross chats to **Nana Pam**, one of easyJet's longest serving crew members, to discuss what life is really like at 35,000ft and how she has no intention of hanging up her wings anytime soon

The role of cabin crew is twofold. The first is to be the public face of the airline, providing a comfortable and enjoyable experience for passengers. The second is to ensure that the flight is carried out safely and securely. Sadly, the latter is sometimes overlooked, and despite the notion that cabin crew are merely there to serve food and drinks, these highly trained professionals are actually aviation's first responders.

Currently, easyJet employs more than 8,000 cabin crew members. Before taking to the skies, each one goes through a rigorous initial training programme at one of the airline's state-of-the-art crew training facilities.

Pam Clark, aka Nana Pam, joined easyJet in 2003 at the age of 52. Now, aged 75, she is the oldest cabin crew member in Europe and quite possibly the world, a status that fell to her following the death of 88-year-old American flight attendant Bette Nash in 2024.

Airliner World (ALW): **Nana Pam, tell us about your easyJet journey?**
Nana Pam (NP): When I was a little girl, I always wanted to be cabin crew. That was my dream. However, when I left school, you needed specific qualifications, including at least one language, which meant my dream was over before it began. So I took up hairdressing and manicuring instead, and then I had my son, and I was lucky enough to be at home and bring him up.

When he got older, my friend and I used to go on day trips once a month, flying with easyJet from London/Luton to Madrid. On one of these trips, we were looking through the in-flight magazine when my friend stumbled across a recruitment advert for crew. She threw the magazine at me and said, "This is your golden opportunity. You have to apply." When I got home, I spoke to my late husband, who told me to go for it and fully supported my decision.

ABOVE: ***Pam Clark, or Nana Pam as she is best known, started working for easyJet in 2003 when she was 52 years old, fulfilling a lifelong dream*** EASYJET

Despite the advert saying that they were looking for more mature applicants, the fact that I was 52 at the time did make me feel slightly apprehensive. However, I applied, went for the interview, and a few days later, I learnt that I'd got the job. The next thing I knew, I was at the training centre in Luton, and it was here that I got the name 'Nana Pam' because I was the oldest person on the course. The nickname stuck, and the rest, as they say, is history.

ALW: **What has made you stay with easyJet for so long?**
NP: I love my job and I love the company. We're like a family. From

management to pilots to my cabin crew colleagues. Everyone is so supportive. We care about each other. If we encounter a problem, management will listen and do their best to assist us. They are genuinely concerned about your welfare, and also your safety and security. I wouldn't dream of going anywhere else.

***ALW:* In the 22 years that you've been here, do you think the role of cabin crew has changed?**
NP: It has, but for the better. Things are a lot more digitalised than when I started. Back in the early years, we still had paper safety manuals and forms to fill out. Now, this has all been replaced with iPads, which we use to access our manuals and complete paperwork online.

There's also been a change in our passenger profile, especially with the launch of easyJet Holidays. We've always had families on board, but there has been a definite shift there. I love having the children on board; it's great to see how excited they get being on a plane.

Then there's our uniform, which has certainly got smarter and less orange over the years. Our new uniform rolls out soon, and we are all very excited about that.

***ALW:* Being crew isn't just about serving food and drinks. Explain to us the training involved in becoming an easyJet cabin crew member?**
NP: When you first join the airline, you go through your initial training course. Today, this consists of some online training, which you have to complete before you start your classroom learning, which lasts for three weeks. Here, all aspects of the role are covered, including standard operating procedures (SOPs), safety and emergency procedures (SEPs) and first aid training.

You have a yearly recurrent training which also consists of some online and classroom work, as well as exams. This is used to refresh our SOP, SEP and first aid knowledge. Then, every three years, we go to one of our state-of-the-art training facilities to carry out our fire, smoke and door drills.

This entails entering a smoke-filled cabin to carry out several scenarios. We also have to show the trainers that we can put out a fire in our fire rig. Then there are our door drills, where we have to carry out the standard opening and closing of the doors, as well as emergency evacuation commands and procedures.

We also have our quarterly online business training. This is to ensure that we are up to date with all the goings-on in the business to make sure that we can offer the best service to our customers.

For me though, I still always look through our manual to refresh my memory, because things change, and during our briefings, you've got to be on top of it.

Of course, you hope that you'll never have to use any of your emergency training. But you'd be surprised how much you do, especially with first aid. But you don't give it a second thought. It just comes naturally, and that proves how good our training is.

***ALW:* Is there much opportunity for progression with easyJet?**
NP: Absolutely. There's so much scope within the company. When I started, base management were keen for me to apply for [the role of] cabin manager, which I did and I was successful after being here for a year.

A few of the flight deck have said that I should apply for the trainer role because of my experience. But I would miss flying, and to be honest, you help the crew out on board anyway.

A lot of crew will come to me for advice and say, 'Nana Pam, can I talk to you? What do you think about this?' That comes with age and experience, I guess. They know they can talk to me in confidence about things. I don't do Galley FM! If I can help my crew and they get off feeling like they've learned something, then that's good enough for me.

***ALW:* Describe your typical day at easyJet?**
NP: Well, I like to start my day early. I don't want to rush, so I get ready in my own time at home and then make my way to the airport. You then meet the cabin crew and flight crew onboard the aircraft, where we carry out a pre-flight briefing discussing flight times, any weather or slot issues, service standards, etc. Once this has been carried out and all our safety and security checks have been completed, we're ready to welcome our customers on board.

Every day is different. No two flights are the same. You can do the same route, over and over, but it will always be different, and that's one of the best parts of the job. Some routes can, of course, be more challenging than others. But you learn to treat every passenger the same and treat them how you would expect to be treated.

If we have a rowdy group on, I will often have a quiet word with them because what they have to understand is that there are other paying customers on board that aircraft. We have families, and there may be children. So, it's just a little word, but then I end up having lots of fun and banter with them, and they respect me more for that.

I've been lucky, really, during my career. I can't really say I've experienced any particularly challenging flights, or indeed any significant challenges in my role.

As long as our customers smile when they get on and smile when they get off, then I know I've done a good job.

***ALW:* Tell us about your most memorable day at easyJet?**
NP: Well, there are so many! However, one amusing one that really stands out to me involves a trombone. We were boarding on an airbridge, and the next thing, this, what looked like a walking trombone came down the bridge to the aircraft door. You couldn't see the person carrying it, just a pair of legs. I then had to help him put it into the seat and secure it, but it had tickled me that much, I couldn't stop laughing.

***ALW:* How does it feel to be the oldest cabin crew member in Europe, if not the world?**
NP: I feel very proud, and easyJet has been incredible about it and so supportive. For my 73rd birthday, they made such a fuss, it goes back to what I said earlier about being part of one big orange family. I have no intention of leaving yet. I can still fulfil all the requirements of the role, and I still enjoy it.

***ALW:* What advice would you give to anyone looking to apply for a cabin crew position?**
NP: Do it! My dream finally came true at the age of 52. Never give up. AW

BELOW: *After 22 years, Nana Pam has no intention of leaving her orange family any time soon*
MARTIN NEEDHAM

ABOVE: ***David Morgan is easyJet's chief operating officer*** EASYJET

Every Friday morning begins the same way for David Morgan – not with emails or meetings, but with a pre-flight checklist. A career pilot, he still manages to fly despite the demands of being easyJet's chief operating officer (COO). Rising very early on a Friday, he normally operates one of the first wave flights out of Luton, or sometimes Gatwick, to be back in the office by around lunchtime.

"I do it because I love it and I've been flying for 40 years and don't intend to give up until they take my medical away from me," he told us. "It also keeps me really in touch with what's happening in the operation, not just from our own crew and engineers, but for example, even visualising airspace so when I'm in meetings in Brussels or London about airspace reform and design… I can visualise what it actually means, because I'm experiencing it regularly."

With a fleet of 356 aircraft serving over 1,000 routes across almost 40 countries from over 30 bases, orchestrating this sprawling network is no small feat.

As COO, Morgan oversees the "doing" aspect of the airline, including engineering, ground handling, pilots and cabin crew. He joined the carrier in September 2016 as chief pilot before being promoted to director of flight operations the following December. An appointment to COO came in November 2022 after serving in an interim capacity from July 2022 and earlier in 2019.

"The top priority is to ensure safe operations of our flights," he said. "We have a very busy operation with nearly 2,000 flights every day and a third of a million customers daily in the summer period, so ensuring that all of those customers are moved safely around Europe and beyond is my top priority."

Going green

With responsibility for the operation falling to him, Morgan finds himself at the front line of delivering results in the area of sustainability and the reduction of CO_2 emissions. One initiative introduced under his watch was the fleet-wide upgrade of Airbus' Descent Profile Optimisation (DPO) technology through a software update to the onboard Flight Management System (FMS). This upgrade was combined with a flying technique called Continuous Descent Approach (CDA). "DPO and CDA gives us around a

RIGHT: ***A key initiative rolled out under Morgan's watch has been DPO and CDA which enables a continuous descent from cruise altitude all the way to the runway*** VINCENZO PACE

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At the controls

Airliner World spoke to easyJet chief operating officer **David Morgan** about running one of Europe's busiest airlines, embracing sustainability and harnessing AI, all while staying true to the carrier's founding values

1% fuel saving, and a fuel saving directly relates to a carbon saving, so we save around 44,000 tons per year as a result," he revealed.

Instead of levelling off during a descent, the aim, with the help of the technology, is to make a continuous descent from cruise altitude all the way to the runway. However, the reality is this is not always achievable. Morgan explained: "The airspace within Europe doesn't lend itself particularly well to doing that everywhere. And in fact, in a lot of places, you're kind of stuck because of the very old airspace design… which means we can't utilise DPO and CDA to its full potential yet, but as airspace becomes modernised, then the improvements we're seeing today will get better and better."

Airspace headaches

Morgan described airspace redesign and modernisation as the "lowest hanging fruit" in terms of decarbonisation. "When we when we talk about things like SAF, to extract a 10% decarbonisation value from SAF, you've got to be building dozens of refineries – a multi-billion-pound project – just to be able to get anything close to 10%," he explained. "If you modernised airspace, you'd get 10%, so you get much more bang for your buck by modernising airspace."

The airspace aircraft fly around in today is "essentially the same as when people flew around in the 1950s," according to Morgan. It relies heavily on ground-based navigation aids such as VORs: "I'm flying tomorrow morning and I'm heading off towards France. I know for sure I'm going to head over the Southampton VOR… I'll fly right over the top within a few centimetres' accuracy. But I don't need to use that beacon. I really want to go a bit to the right because I'm heading off to Lisbon, but I'm flying over it because it's on the M25 [motorway] equivalent on that airway."

Morgan would like to see a world without airways – which are generally referred to as highways in the sky – and instead would like to be able to "route direct everywhere". Satellite-based navigation is the technological key to enabling this – but regulation is the real roadblock.

Adding AI

The world is currently experiencing an artificial intelligence (AI) revolution with every industry being impacted by its capabilities. EasyJet has begun to roll out the technology within its operations »

easyJet
OE-LSI

LEFT: ***Despite being COO, Morgan still manages to fly once a week, typically on a Friday morning*** AIRBUS

centre, with Morgan describing the airline as being "at the foothills" of seeing AI in action across the company.

"It's really exciting," he enthused. "It can take masses of complex data and then come up with options which would normally be reliant on just the experience of somebody sitting in that seat for the last 20 years. We're not replacing somebody with AI, but we're now giving them objective options that they can then consider as to which are the best options."

Morgan highlighted two areas where AI is currently assisting within operations. The first is with delay and disruption management. He explained that when disruptions hit easyJet's daily flight schedules, decisions have traditionally relied on the judgement of experienced duty managers. This is actually a "highly complex mathematical problem" – one that AI can help solve by balancing costs, customer satisfaction, and aircraft positioning. EasyJet is now starting to explore using AI alongside human expertise to make smarter operational decisions.

Another area of AI deployment concerns making crew standby availability more efficient. Traditionally, if a base dropped below a certain threshold, crews would automatically be repositioned from other airports just in case they were needed: "We've got an AI tool now that will look at many more things than we would think about and go 'I don't think you need it'. Based on the environment that we've got, the weather for the day, the historical flights that you're going to be operating today, the data tells me that you're not going to use them, and it's amazingly accurate.

"I think it's exciting the journey we're on with using AI, to make it a better customer experience," he affirmed.

AI is also revolutionising engineering for easyJet through the use of predictive maintenance technology. In 2018, the low-cost carrier signed a five-year contract with Airbus to spearhead its then-new Skywise services across its fleet. This technology allows easyJet's engineers to intervene early and replace parts before the component's failure, thereby preventing passengers from experiencing delays and cancellations.

During an initial trial of the platform which focused on 85 aircraft in the

BELOW: ***Morgan believes airspace redesign and reform are key to unlocking efficiency and sustainability benefits*** NATS

ABOVE: ***EasyJet partnered with Airbus in 2018 spearheading the manufacturer's Skywise platform*** AIRBUS/P MASCLET/ MASTER FILMS

ABOVE RIGHT: ***The airline uses predictive maintenance to pre-empt faults and failures so that work can be carried out before it creates disruption to the flying programme*** KEY-BARRY WOODS-TURNER

fleet, Skywise predicted 31 technical failures which enabled the airline to remove components before a fault occurred. This meant that at least 31 flights – which would have carried more than 4,400 passengers – operated on schedule that would otherwise have been disrupted. Had the fault occurred at a remote airport, the problem could have led to an overnight delay and knock on delays on other flights.

Morgan said: "We're predicting stuff that hasn't yet happened and we're using AI again to help with that, and we partner with Airbus on that technology. It's fantastic."

Orange spirit

Despite all the technology and innovation, Morgan believes it's the people that make easyJet unique: "I know I'm biased, but it truly is a fantastic airline to work for and to be part of," he enthused. "We have something we call 'the orange spirit' where when you start at easyJet it's as if you get a blood transfusion and then you live and breathe the orange spirit."

He stressed that the airline has stayed true to its founding values: "We passionately believe in the model and the brand, and we believe that our values today are the same ones that we started with 30 years ago – to democratise air travel and make it affordable for anybody."

He reflected that younger travellers take cheap fares for granted, but "it wasn't that many decades ago where you had to be pretty wealthy before you could fly." While affordability remains central, he said the airline also prides itself on quality: "We are proud that our crew, particularly our cabin crew, are well known globally for being fantastic – we treasure that and make sure that we hold on to that value, because that makes us stand out from perhaps another low-cost airline... we give the warmest welcome in the sky and hopefully on the ground as well."

"The customer is everything for us. We are passionate about making their experience the best it can possibly be." AW

RIGHT: ***Morgan said the airline's cabin crew live and breathe the "orange spirit" and have a global reputation for "being fantastic"*** EASYJET

easyJet
easyJet

BELOW: ***With a fleet of 356 aircraft serving 1,207 routes across 38 countries from 32 bases, easyJet operates on a scale few rivals can match*** AIRBUS/HERVE GOUSSE/ MASTER FILMS

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898/25

A classic at King County

Andreas Rohde steps back in time to learn how the future once looked, with a visit to King County International Airport in Seattle

Today most travellers arriving in Seattle fly into Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, and maybe only a few are aware that just four miles south of the city centre, a historic air terminal is still serving passengers. King County International Airport, more commonly known as Boeing Field, was once Seattle's primary aerial gateway.

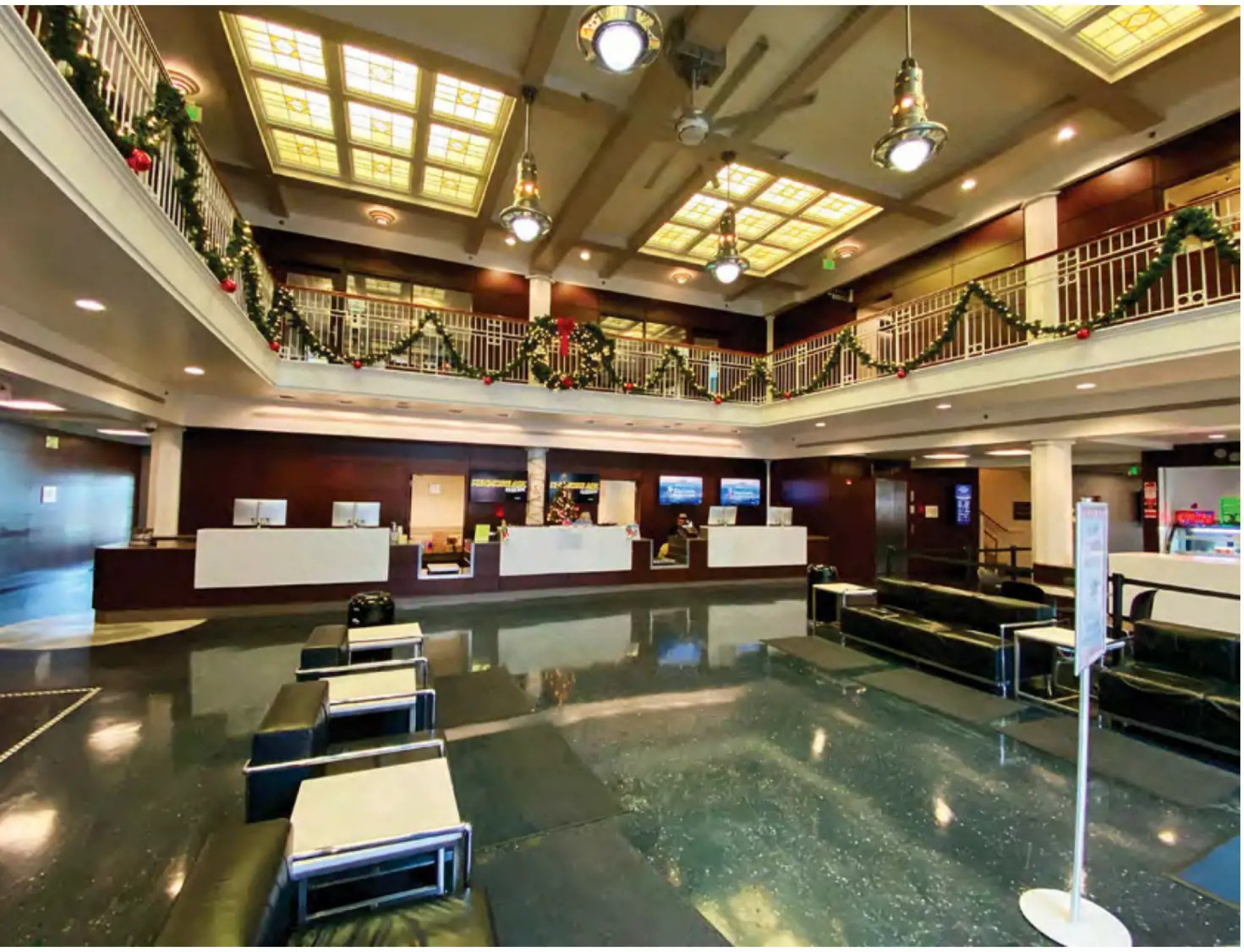
In the early days of the 20th century, the area alongside the banks of the Duwamish River was one of industry. It was here that William Edward Boeing and his Boeing Airplane Company produced military aircraft from 1917, and maintained a small and rudimentary airfield to test his creations. However, it would take another decade to develop a proper facility with adequate infrastructure.

The King County Municipal Airport was officially dedicated on July 26, 1928, and the following day the brand new 12-passenger Boeing Model 80 trimotor biplane underwent its maiden flight. Pacific Air Transport, a division of Boeing's airline activities, became one of the airfield's primary users and one of the nation's early airmail carriers. It took another two years for the passenger terminal and administration building to be completed.

The terminal was officially opened on April 21, 1930, and consisted of a central passenger area with space for service counters, departure lounge, and food and drink concessions, all flanked by two administrative wings. The first airlines to use the new facility were West Coast Air Transport and Pacific Air Transport, operating services to Portland and San Francisco. When Pacific Air Transport became fully integrated into United Airlines in 1931, United became the largest operator at the airfield, which had by then established itself as the region's primary passenger airport.

In 1941 the 5,825ft runway was paved, and then on December 6 that year, a day before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the airport was closed to the public and scheduled services moved to Paine Field, 30 miles to the north. During World War Two, Boeing Field became devoted to the production of Boeing B-17 and B-29 heavy bombers, building several thousand during the conflict. Following the end of the

RIGHT: ***The terminal building first opened to passengers on April 21, 1930*** ALL IMAGES ANDREAS ROHDE



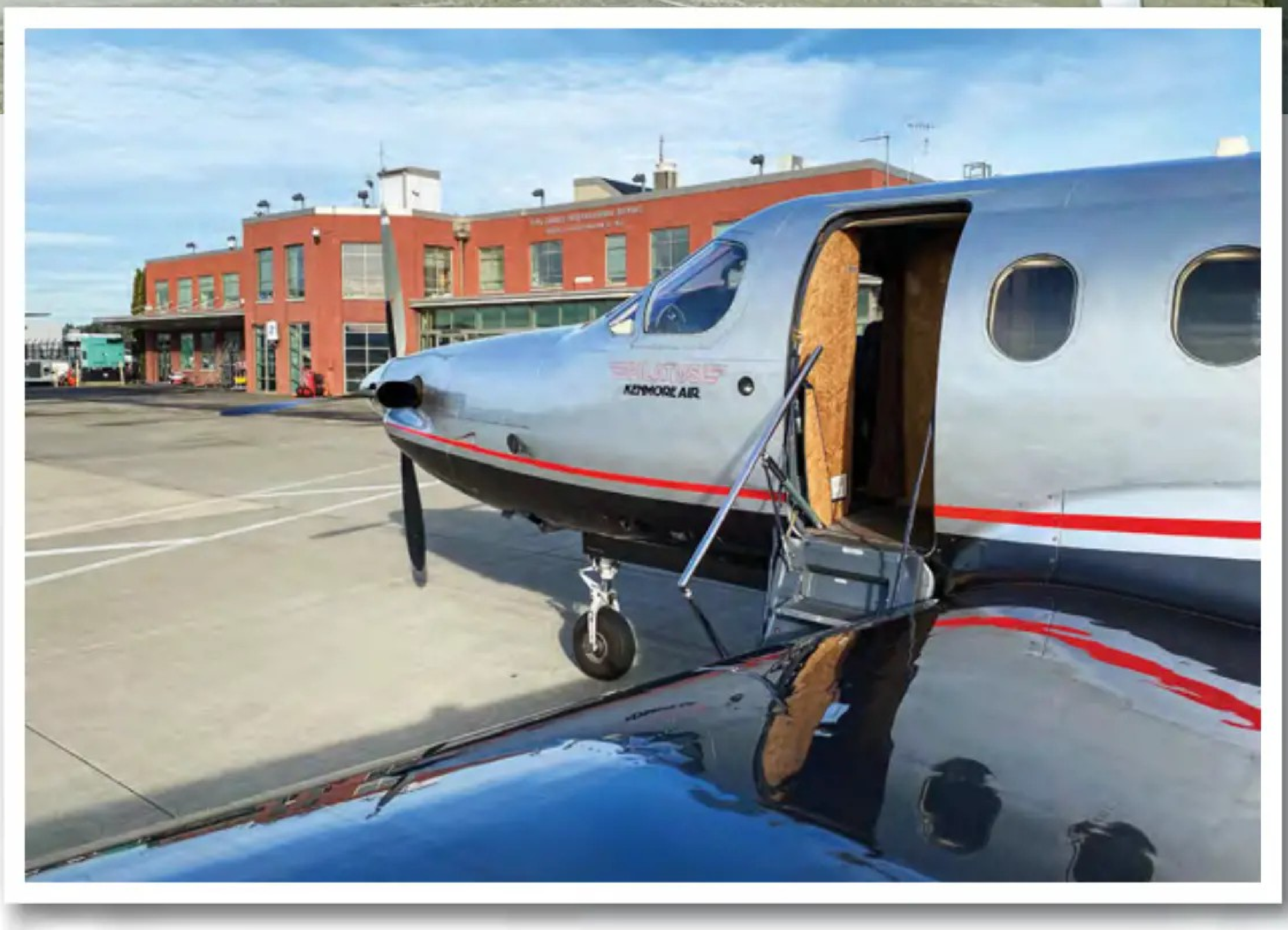
BELOW: ***West Coast Air Transport and Pacific Air Transport were the first airlines to call the terminal building home***

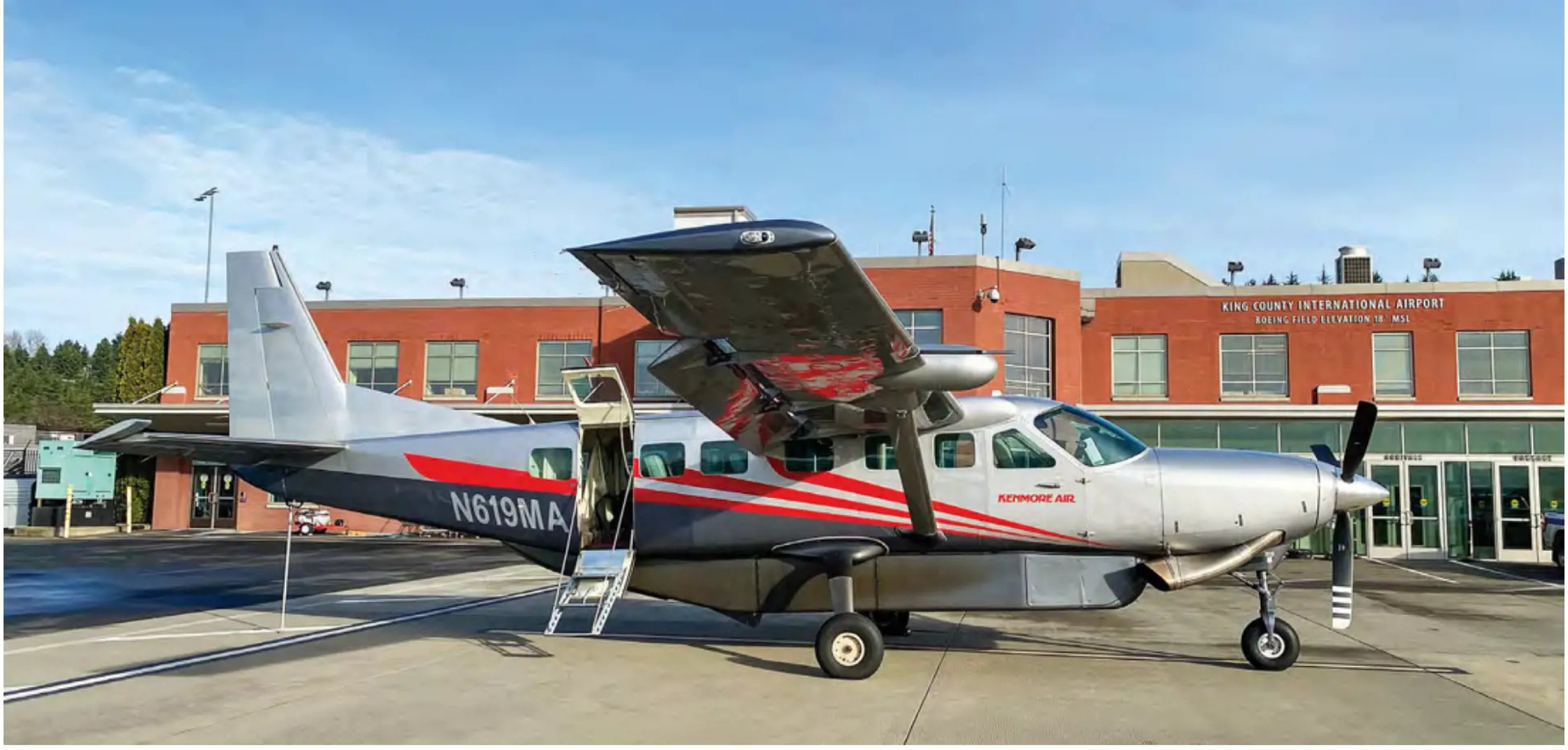
KING COUNTY AIRPORT
7277 PERIMETER ROAD

war, civilian operations resumed, with Northwest Airlines and United Airlines becoming the primary users. By 1950, Pan Am was operating a prestigious weekly nonstop service to Honolulu using its Boeing 377 Stratocruisers.

However, towards the end of World War Two, a new airport was constructed five miles to the south, between the cities of Seattle and Tacoma, with a view to replacing Boeing Field as a commercial facility. Scheduled services from the new Seattle-Tacoma International Airport commenced in 1947, although United, Northwest and Pan Am continued to maintain a downscaled operation at Boeing Field for a few more years. As the »

RIGHT: ***Kenmore Air Express Pilatus PC-12, N830RR (c/n 1149) is primarily used for charter flights, and is seen here awaiting charter customers for a flight to northern Idaho***




KING COUNTY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
BOEING FIELD ELEVATION 18 MSL
N619MA
KENMORE AIR

ABOVE: ***Kenmore Air Express Cessna 208B Grand Caravan, N619MA (c/n 208B2192), awaiting passengers for a scenic flight***

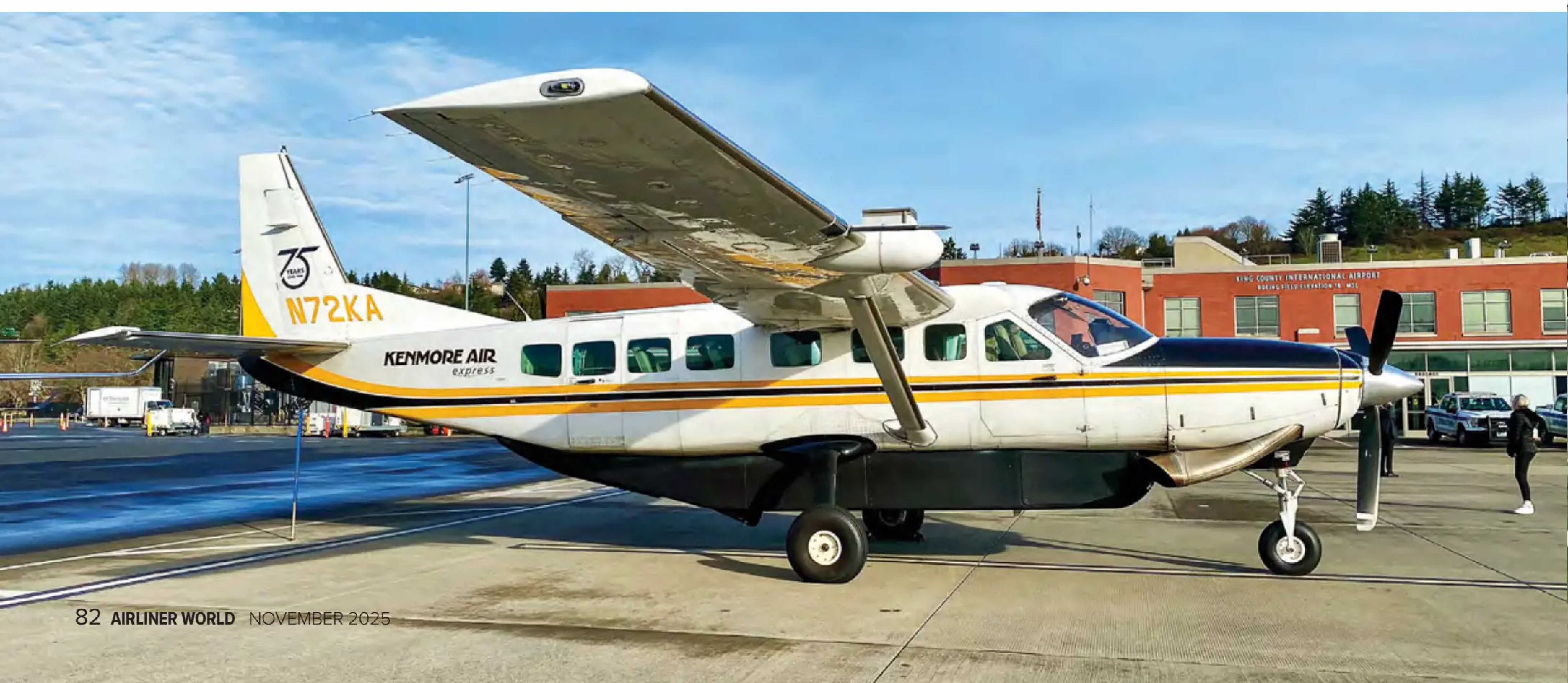
LEFT: ***Floor to ceiling windows in the departure lounge offer expansive views of the aircraft parked on the apron***

major airlines finally moved over to the new hub, a number of regional air carriers continued to operate from the facility.

West Coast Air became the most prominent operator, flying Douglas DC-3s, Fairchild F-27s and later on, McDonnell Douglas DC-9 jetliners. Its successor, Hughes Air West, offered DC-9 services from Boeing Field until 1971. Other operators included Aeroamerica with Boeing 707s and 720s, Air Oregon using Fairchild Swearingen

Primary airports of Seattle

King County International Airport (Boeing Field) is not the only facility in the area with an association to the manufacturer. Paine Field International Airport (Snohomish County Airport) on the outskirts of Everett dates from 1936 and is where Boeing has its gargantuan assembly plant. It has two runways, 16R/34L (9,010 x 150ft) and 16L/34R (3,004 x 75ft) with commercial services offered by Alaska Airlines and Frontier Airlines. Renton Municipal Airport (Clayton Scott Field) lies a dozen miles southeast of the city and opened in 1945. It's home to the Boeing narrowbody assembly plant and also supports general aviation from its solitary runway 16/34 (5,382 x 200ft). Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is the main state hub and processed its first commercial flights in 1947. With more than 40 airlines operating from the facility, its connection to Boeing is little more than the aircraft types that operate from here. The three-runway hub –16L/34R (11,901 x 150ft), 16C/34C (9,426 x 150ft) and 16R/34L (8,500 x 150ft) – is far removed from the early days of Boeing Field.



BELOW: ***Kenmore Air Express Cessna 208B Grand Caravan N72KA (c/n 208B0326) with '75 years' commemorative stickers on the tail***

> "Following the end of the war, civilian operations resumed, with Northwest Airlines and United Airlines becoming the primary users"

ABOVE: ***The Boeing Model 80 on display at the Museum of Flight was built in 1929, one of just 16 to be produced***

Metroliners, SeaPort Airlines operating Pilatus PC-12s, and Helijet which offered Sikorsky S-76 helicopter services from the Victoria Harbour Heliport in Vancouver. More recently, JSX (JetSuiteX) began services to Oakland International Airport in July 2019 with Embraer ERJ135s, but discontinued these flights the following year in the wake of COVID-19.

Today, Kenmore Air Express is the exclusive tenant of this beautiful, historic air terminal, which underwent a major renovation in 2003. It currently operates year-round services to Friday Harbor and Eastsound on Orcas Island, as well as scenic flights to and around Mount Rainier and Mount Saint Helens, with a fleet comprising a solitary Cessna 208 Caravan and a trio of Cessna 208B Grand Caravans. Additionally, a Pilatus PC-12 is used for charter services.

Air traffic operates from two parallel runways: 14R/32L (10,000 x 200ft) and 14L/32R (3,710 x 100ft). Since 1962, air traffic control has regulated traffic from a centrally located control tower, which replaced the original control tower located on the northwestern top of the administration building.

Travelling through the historic terminal today is to step back in time to the 1930s. Surrounded by a gallery, the central passenger hall has an open, spacious feeling, allowing passengers to walk straight up to the check-in counters on the far side. The departure lounge is graced by floor-to-ceiling windows, which allow passengers to view the aircraft parked outside on the apron. Once boarding is called, waiting aircraft are just a few steps away. The old terminal provides a charming and relaxed travel experience in an historic environment that appears far removed from the hectic and congested modernity down the road at Seattle-Tacoma.

As well as offering a vintage terminal, King County International is one of the busiest general aviation airports in the US. A colourful mix of users include cargo, corporate, and general aviation, Boeing Company operations (including test flight and delivery centre), plus the US military. In addition, it is home to the world-renowned Museum of Flight, the largest not-for-profit air and space museum in the world. AW

BOEING AIRPLANE Co

BELOW: ***The Red Barn where William Boeing built his aircraft, relocated from the banks of the Duwamish River to the Museum of Flight in 1975***

Surv in the

Lufthansa
Airbus A340-600
Mönchengladbach

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, many airlines took the opportunity to review their fleets. The drop in demand for air travel accelerated the already slow decline of four-engine airliners in favour of their twin-engine counterparts. After the final Boeing 747 was delivered in January 2023, the era of new-build quadjet airliner production ended.

One aircraft which appears to have somewhat survived this quadjet cull is the Airbus A340. Designed during the late 1980s in parallel with the twin-engine A330, the aircraft was targeted at long-range routes with four engines providing redundancy for oceanic crossings.

The A340 was initially offered in two variants, the -200 and -300, seating up to 261 and 295 passengers, respectively, in typical three-class cabins. The former has the distinction of having a wingspan wider than the length of its fuselage. Both aircraft are powered by the CFM International CFM56 family of engines and have maximum take-off weights (MTOW) of approximately 275 tonnes. The A340-300 was by far and away the most successful A340 model with 218 units delivered out of the total 377 delivered to airlines.

In 1995, Boeing introduced its 777, a more efficient twinjet. In response, Airbus introduced the A340-500 and A340-600, providing increased passenger loads and extended range. These heavier models (380t MTOW) are equipped with more powerful Rolls-Royce Trent 500 engines. However, the rising cost of fuel combined with ETOPS (Extended-range Twin-engine Operations Performance Standards) gave twin-engine aircraft the upper hand. Neither the -500 nor the -600 were a top seller, with only 34 and 97 examples built, respectively.

German giant

The A340 survives in the largest commercial numbers in Europe, predominantly within the Lufthansa Group of airlines, namely Lufthansa, Swiss International Air Lines (SWISS) and Edelweiss Air.

ivor
skies

Once hailed as Airbus' answer to ultra-long-haul travel, the four-engined A340 has been overshadowed by more efficient twinjets. Yet from Lufthansa's Frankfurt hub to leisure flights from Zurich, cargo runs from Bournemouth and even VIP duties in the Middle East, the quadjet continues to defy expectations. As retirements loom, **Chris Croot** charts the twilight years of one of aviation's most distinctive widebodies

German giant Lufthansa operates a 22-strong fleet of A340s, including six of the largest -600 variant
ALL IMAGES VINCENZO PACE UNLESS STATED

Lufthansa penned the most orders for the type, buying 62 example – eight -200s (launch customer), 30 -300s and 24 -600s. It is now the only European airline to operate the A340-300 and A340-600 variants and also maintains the largest global A340 fleet with 22 aircraft (16 -300s and six -600s).

In October 2024, the airline concentrated its A340 operations at Frankfurt, the type having previously also flown from Munich. Both variants are operated on long-haul routes to North and South America, Africa and Asia.

Lufthansa is gradually reducing the number of A340s in its fleet, and under current plans, all will be retired by 2028. The -600s will be removed first, potentially by the end of 2025. As new orders are completed (Lufthansa is awaiting delivery of ten Airbus A350-1000s) the A340-300s will follow their siblings to the boneyard.

Of SWISS' original fleet of 15 A340-300s, only four remain in service. The retirement of the type is set to begin with the arrival of its first Airbus A350-900 towards the end of 2025.

At the time of writing, Swiss leisure airline Edelweiss Air has a fleet of five A340-300 aircraft, four of which were transferred from sister company SWISS between October 2016 and September 2018. In a somewhat anti-trend move, a fifth aircraft was transferred in April 2023, reinstating capacity lost by the retirement of the airline's two Airbus A330-300s in 2021. The Zurich-based carrier received its first two A350-900s in March and July 2025 [see *Airliner World* July 2025] and will shortly begin a phase out of the A340s.

Enno Lüdtke, head of corporate development at Edelweiss explained how the A340 has been a well-suited aircraft for its operation: "After COVID-19, we only had four A340s and two A330s, which actually left us with this sort of micro fleet within our long-haul fleet. For example, if an A330 was AOG (Aircraft On Ground – unserviceable), we would have a qualified crew sitting there, but need to send an A340 to recover, or vice-versa. We were not able to cover the full »

ABOVE: ***With 16 in its fleet, Lufthansa operates the world's largest fleet of A340-300s***

destination network with the A330s which was also a limitation. The A340 was the more versatile workhorse."

It may also be thanks to A340 that, in part, Edelweiss was able to successfully navigate the pandemic: "Compared to a later generation aircraft, the A340 has a comparatively low capital cost. It is cheaper to leave parked during long periods of no flying," said Lüdtke.

The A340 may now be an ageing aircraft, but Edelweiss' fleet is one of the youngest still flying. The five aircraft rolled off the Toulouse production line in 2003. As part of the transfer from SWISS to Edelweiss, the aircraft's cabins were completely refurbished. Despite this, there can be no hiding the fact that the A340 consumes significantly more fuel and requires a higher degree of engineering support than the latest generation of twinjets.

To maximise operating revenue, Edelweiss uses a leisure cabin configuration. In comparison to SWISS' A340s which seat 215 passengers, Edelweiss aircraft can accommodate a total of 314 passengers over a three-class cabin.

The company has to give careful consideration when selecting destinations and departure times, but does use the tourist path to its advantage: "The A340 does have some limitations, it's not the best performing aircraft, even if it has four engines, which limits us sometimes with high payloads or in certain wind or temperature conditions. In these locations, we plan our take-offs in the cooler morning hours. They are not regularly planned, but there are some situations when we do need to do an intermediate fuel stop," explained Lüdtke.

"Cartagena (Colombia) is at sea level, meaning we can take-off fully fuelled with a full payload. The tourist flow helps, people doing round trips can go from Bogotá and end up in Cartagena," he added.

To negate cruise speed limitations, Edelweiss' operational planners ensure their A340 fleet is delivering the maximum financial return: "We have a very high utilisation of the aircraft, over 17 hours per day," said Lüdtke. This results in tight turnarounds and small margins for time recovery. The new Airbus A350-900 fleet will allow more time to be built into flight schedules thanks to its significantly improved performance.

The future of Edelweiss' long-haul fleet is the Airbus A350-900. The first of an eventual six aircraft was delivered on March 13, 2025. The first four aircraft were originally delivered to the South American airline LATAM, and another two are currently operated by Thai Airways International. As each aircraft is delivered and completes a nose-to-tail cabin refit programme, one A340 will be retired, maintaining a fleet of six wide bodies until the crossover is complete. The last A350 is due to leave retrofit in 2027, and with that, the Edelweiss A340 chapter will come to a close.

BELOW: ***Lufthansa Group airline SWISS holds a four-strong roster of A340-300s which were delivered new between June 2003 and May 2004***
KEY-THOMAS HAYNES

ABOVE: ***Swiss leisure carrier – and fellow Lufthansa Group airline – Edelweiss Air currently has five A340-300s*** KEY-THOMAS HAYNES

Freight focus

Airbus did not develop a dedicated freighter version of the A340, nor has any third-party company built any conversions. However, this did not stop British operator European Cargo from launching a cargo-only operation. The company, based at Bournemouth Airport with a second hub at Cardiff Airport, has a fleet of nine A340-600s, which formerly flew with Virgin Atlantic and Iberia.

Five aircraft have been modified to operate as freighters with the removal of all cabin bulkheads and fixtures, and the installation of 39 cargo pods. These pods can hold 40 tons of cargo while the lower deck can hold an additional 52 tons in pallets and 3.5 tons of bulk-loaded items.

Flight tracking data and recent media reports suggests the majority of the work carried out by these quadjet freighters is carrying e-commerce packages from China (namely Chengdu and Chongqing) to the UK.

Inside Iran

Though western sanctions are making it incredibly difficult to source spares, the A340 continues to operate in respectable numbers in Iran. Mahan Air, a privately-owned airline, is believed to have 15 on its books, split across the -200 (one), -300 (nine) and -600 (five) variants. Tehran-based Iran Aseman Airlines also operates a single A340-300.

Over the past three years, Iran has successfully avoided western sanctions and acquired no less than six additional A340s. In December 2022, four -300s were removed from storage at Johannesburg/OR Tambo and flown towards Uzbekistan. The former Turkish Airlines jets (serial numbers 115, 180, 270 and 331) were retired between March and April 2019 and stored by AVRO Global. En route to Uzbekistan all four, by then registered in Burkina Faso as XT-AKK, XT-AKB, XT-AHH and XT-ALM, respectively, requested to divert to Tehran/Mehrabad.

The quartet were rumoured to have been purchased by Mahan Air, and indeed -AKK, now registered EP-MJC, and -ALM, now known as EP-MJF, are now in regular service. Currently, -AHH and -AKB do not appear to be active and may be serving as spare parts sources.

In early 2024, two more A340s arrived in Iran via non-standard channels. The aircraft, an A340-313, C5-MIA (c/n 474) and A340-600, C5-MIC (c/n 933), took off from Lithuania's Šiauliai International Airport with flight plans for Sri Lanka and the Philippines. Upon entering Iranian airspace, both aircraft's transponders went off, with one aircraft landing in Tehran and the other at Konarak airport. Both aircraft were transferred onto the Iranian register as EP-MJG and EP-MMU with Mahan Air. Both are now in regular service flying from Tehran to destinations including Moscow, Beijing, Dubai, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Phuket, Istanbul, Ankara, Delhi, Shenzhen, and St Petersburg.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan's largest

»

BELOW: ***For Edelweiss, the introduction of the A350-900 – which began in April this year – will see the exit of the A340*** VBS DDPS/ DONAT ACHERMANN/ EDELWEISS AIR

EUROPEAN cargo
MOVING FORWARD

ABOVE: ***Bournemouth-based European Cargo uses the A340 to conduct e-commerce runs to and from China***

airline Kam Air has three active -300s, in its fleet which operate routes primarily across the Middle East. The airline survived the Taliban takeover in 2021, during which it evacuated a number of its aircraft to Iran. Notably, its A340s parked at Kabul International Airport featured on international news coverage of events. The ex-Iberia machines are configured to seat 346 passengers in a single-class layout. The trio were acquired between April 2018 and June 2019.

A340s in Africa

South African Airways (SAA) is, at the time of writing, the only commercial airline operating the A340 in Africa. The airline has operated 23 A340s during its history, but as the airline battled severe financial difficulties this number dwindled until just two remained. SAA ceased operations in May 2020, returning to flight on September 23, 2021 and resuming long-haul sectors on October 31, 2023.

The airline had planned to retire its remaining A340s by the end of 2023 but at the time of writing, two A340-300s, ZS-SXD (c/n 643) and ZS-SXF (c/n 651) are in routine operation. Despite both aircraft being more than 20 years old, they provide much-needed capacity for SAA. The two A340s are used extensively on the airline's new Johannesburg-Perth route.

A sole A340-300, 3DC-SDF, may be in use by the Kingdom of Eswatini. Online fleet trackers list the aircraft as active, with its most recent flight on August 24, 2025, being a long-haul flight from Tokyo/Haneda to Eswatini's King Mswati III International Airport via a stopover at Singapore/Changi.

Quadjets of Caracas

For those living in South America hoping to experience the A340, the only commercial option is with Venezuelan national airline, Conviasa. With a total

AIRBUS A340
Kam Air
www.kamair.com
ME

BELOW: ***Afghanistan's Kam Air holds a four-strong fleet of A340-300s*** KAM AIR

of six in its roster, at the time of writing, only two -200s, YV1004 (c/n 31) and YV3554 (c/n 81), and one -600, YV3545 (c/n 391), are in service. YV3554 is leased from Mahan Air. A sole -300, YV3507 (c/n 199), and a -600, YV3535 (c/n 416), are currently undergoing maintenance in Tehran. Finally, A340-600, YV3533 (c/n 376), is in Caracas.

The active fleet flies a mix of short-haul regional and long-range sectors, including flights from Caracas to Russian and Chinese cities including Moscow, St Petersburg, Beijing, and Chengdu. Aircraft flying to these destinations are forced to route through international airspace around Europe due to the airline being on the EU's so-called 'black list'. It has been reported that Conviasa operates these particular routes without passengers, as 'ghost flights', drawing speculation as to exactly what is being carried on board.

Governmental and military

Several A340s serve as VIP/governmental transport aircraft. Regardless of variant, all offer a large configurable cabin with substantial range.

The Egyptian government maintains a single -200, SU-GGG (c/n 61), delivered new in 1995, which is operated by 99 Squadron of the Egyptian Air Force. Meanwhile, A340-300, EP-IGA (c/n 257), is used as the long-haul aircraft for the Islamic Republic of Iran's governmental flight.

The Algerian government utilises an A340-500, 7T-VPP (c/n 917), which was delivered new in 2008. Elsewhere, Azerbaijan Airlines operates a sole VIP-configured A340-600, 4K-AI08 (c/n 779). The airline was the last commercial operator of the A340-500 until March 2023, though the official website still lists the type in its fleet. It is believed that 4K-AI08 is the primary means of air travel for Azerbaijani president, Ilham Aliyev.

An A340-500, A7-HHH (c/n 495) forms part of the Qatar Amiri Flight, the private airline of the government of Qatar. The aircraft is primarily used to transport senior members of the Qatari government and has been with the Flight since delivery in September 2003.

Two A340-500s, 9K-GBA (c/n 1091) and 9K-GBB (c/n 1102), are owned and operated by the State of Kuwait for VIP transport. Both aircraft were purchased directly from Airbus in 2010 and 2013, respectively.

The Royal Thai Air Force (RTAF) also operates a single VIP-configured -500. The former Thai Airways aircraft, HS-TYV (c/n 698), joined the RTAF in September 2016 and is based at Bangkok/Don Mueang.

Charter

Despite rising operating costs, the A340 continues to operate in the charter/ACMI (Aircraft, Crew, Maintenance, and Insurance) sector.

Hi Fly, under its subsidiaries Hi Fly Malta and Leaf, uses three A340-300s as part of its wet lease ACMI operation. Two of the aircraft – 9H-TQZ (c/n 202) and 9H-TQY (c/n 190) operated

RIGHT: ***Tehran-based Mahan Air has 15 A340s on its books however, owing to international sanctions, only nine are active, with the rest in maintenance or serving as parts supply airframes*** AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/ MARKUS MAINKA

BELOW: ***South African Airways has operated a large A340 fleet over the years, but now just flies a pair of -300s***

by Hi Fly Malta – are configured in a three-class layout, seating a maximum of 267 passengers. 9H-SUN – used by Leaf, Hi Fly's second Maltese subsidiary – is laid out with 291 seats spread over 24 in business and 267 in economy.

AirX Charter, another Malta-based carrier, operates a single A340-300, 9H-BIG (c/n 374), though this aircraft is configured for only 100 passengers. According to its website, AirX uses 9H-BIG to "blend the scale of commercial air travel with the indulgence of private aviation" rather than targeting traditional wet lease contracts. The company states the aircraft has been equipped for the needs of large groups, including sports teams, with dedicated areas for meetings, pre-game strategies and relaxation zones.

Universal Sky Carrier (USC) GmbH is another ACMI airline utilising a fleet of two A340s, one -300, D-AUSC (c/n 646) and one -600, D-AUSZ (c/n 557). The aircraft are available for either passenger charter or cargo operations, though unlike European Cargo, all cargo is carried in the lower deck. USC was set to be the launch customer for Avensis Aviation's NAVIS PTF (passenger-to-freighter) Class E main deck cargo door conversion for its two aircraft. However,

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

ABOVE: ***A340-313, 3DC-SDF (c/n 406), is operated by the government of the Kingdom of Eswatini (formerly Swaziland)*** AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/ TMTAVIATION

LEFT: ***The Government of Algeria A340-541, 7T-VPP (c/n 917) was delivered new on June 10, 2008*** AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/ TMTAVIATION

conviasa
AIRBUS 340-600
A13
06

The State of Kuwait operates 9K-GBB (c/n 1102) for VIP transport. The quadjet – which was delivered in November 2013 – was the final A340-500 ever built

Avensis filed for bankruptcy protection in April 2024, and so the fate of these plans is now unclear.

Saudi Arabia-based Alpha Star Aviation Services and its subsidiary Sky Prime Aviation Services operate one A340-200, HZ-SKY1 (c/n 9), and one A340-600, HZ-SKY (c/n 924), both fitted with VIP cabins. The former is reportedly the second-oldest A340 still in operation, having first flown on January 13, 1993.

RIGHT: ***Malta's AirX Charter uses A340-312, 9H-BIG (c/n 374), for VIP charter, configured in a 100-seat layout***
AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/JAYDEN HILLS

LEFT: ***Venezuelan flag carrier Conviasa operates a six-strong fleet of A340s including a pair of -200s, a single -300 and a trio of -600s including YV3535 (c/n 416)***
AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/DMITRY TEREKHOV

Legend Airlines is a Romania-based ACMI with a fleet of three A340-300s. According to the company's website, one aircraft, YR-LRC (c/n 844), is based in Romania, while the other two, YR-LRD (c/n 835) and YR-LRE (c/n 938), are based in Fujairah, UAE. Flight tracking data shows LRC conducting a daily rotation between Algiers and Dubai, LRD and LRE have been recorded flying varied sectors throughout the Middle East and North Africa.

Though its days in frontline service are numbered, the Airbus A340 continues to defy expectations. Once hailed as the answer to ultra-long-haul flying, the quadjet has since been overshadowed by more efficient twin-engine designs, yet it still serves an eclectic mix of roles – from holiday flights out of Zurich to e-commerce runs from China, VIP transport and ACMI charters. As airlines gradually transition to the A350 and other new-generation types, the A340 is edging closer to history. But for now, its distinctive four-engine silhouette remains a familiar – and in many cases, much-loved – sight in skies around the world. **AW**

BELOW: ***Ex-Finnair A340-313, YR-LRC (c/n 844), is now operated by Romanian ACMI operator Legend Airlines***
AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/VALENTIN YVON

Airliner Deliveries

The latest commercial aircraft deliveries from manufacturers and lessors

China Eastern Airlines took delivery of Airbus A321neo, B-32LW (c/n 12521), on July 29. The jet was ferried from the manufacturer's Hamburg/Finkenwerder factory to the airline's hub at Shanghai/Pudong via a stop in Kazakhstan at Astana/Nazarbayev
AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/JONAS EVRARD

Moremi Air

A2-	Cessna 208B/EX	208B5885	ex N90041, dd 08.25, ferried Wichita – Maun 01-05.08.25

Oman Air [WY/OMA 'Oman Air']

A4O-MP	B737-8	63370	ex N4022T, ff 16.05.25, dd 03.07.25

SalamAir [OV/OMS 'Mazoon']

A4O-OXH	A321-253nx	12631	ex D-AXXM, ff 22.07.25, dd 31.07.25, lsd fr SMBC Aviation Capital, named 'Matrah'

Emirates [EK/UAE 'Emirates']

A6-EXF	A350-941	694	ex F-WZFQ, ff 18.04.25, dd 03.07.25

Etihad Airways [EY/ETD 'Etihad']

A6-BNI	B787-9	42368	ff 20.06.25, dd 08.07.25
A6-BNJ	B787-9	42370	ff 15.07.25, dd 25.07.25
A6-LRA	A321-251nx	12471	ex D-AZYD, ff 27.06.25, dd 23.07.25 to NAS Aviation Service, lsd fr AerCap
A6-XWH	A350-1041	730	ex F-WZGS, ff 23.06.25, dd 17.07.25

flydubai [FZ/FDB 'Sky Dubai']

A6-FQI	B737-8	61032	ex N40219, N4022T, ff 18.06.25, dd 28.07.25
A6-FQK	B737-8	61035	ff 19.06.25, dd 17.07.25

Qatar Airways [QR/QTR 'Qatari']

A7-ACX	A330-243	1227	ex A4O-DG, dd 06.08.25
A7-BSA	B737-8	43316	ret fr IndiGo lse & ferried Delhi – Doha DIA 31.07.25 & parked
A7-BSB	B737-8	43317	ret fr IndiGo lse & ferried Delhi – Doha DIA 20.08.25 & parked
A7-BSC	B737-8	43329	ret fr IndiGo lse & ferried Delhi – Doha DIA 27.08.25 & parked
A7-BSD	B737-8	43338	ret fr IndiGo lse & parked Doha DIA
A7-BSE	B737-8	43342	ret fr IndiGo lse & ferried Delhi – Doha DIA 13.08.25 & parked
A7-BSF	B737-8	43315	ret fr IndiGo lse & ferried Delhi – Doha DIA 05.08.25

Gulf Air [GF/GFA 'Gulf Air']

A9C-TH	A320-251n	12574	ex F-WWBC, ff 24.06.25, dd 09.07.25

Air China [CA/CCA 'Air China']

B-658J	C919-100ER	29	ex B-002X, ff 27.06.25, dd 06.08.25

Air China Cargo [CA/CAO 'Airchina Freight']

B-6117	A330-243(F)	903	ex F-WWKR, dd 07.25 & entered service 02.08.25

China Cargo Airlines [CK/CKK 'Cargo King']

B-227G	B777-F	69513	ff 23.04.25, dd 07.07.25, lsd fr CES Leasing Corp

China Eastern Airlines [MU/CES 'China Eastern']

B-20A3	B737-8	61637	ex N242BE, N1780B, N1786B, ff 02.04.19, dd 11.07.25
B-32LW	A321-251nx	12521	ex D-AVXK, ff 19.06.25, dd 29.07.25

China Express Airlines [G5/HXA 'China Express']

B-32MH	A320-271n	12689	ex B-000G, ff 27.06.25, dd 14.07.25

China Southern Airlines [CZ/CSN 'China Southern']

B-20EW	B787-9	63989	ff 09.02.21, dd 08.07.25
B-32ML	A320-251n	12736	ex B-000K, ff 20.06.25, dd 14.07.25
B-32MP	A321-251nx	12709	ex B-000J, ff 13.06.25, dd 05.07.25
B-32MQ	A320-251n	12737	ex B-000L, ff 04.07.25, dd 15.07.25
B-32M8	A320-251n	12627	ex F-WWDU, ff 02.07.25, dd 16.07.25
B-32N5	A321-251nx	12754	ex B-000M, ff 08.07.25, dd 18.07.25
B-224L	B737-8	65254	ex N249BE, N5515X, N4022S, N4022T, ff 16.08.23, dd 31.07.25

GX Airlines [GX/CBG 'Green City']

B-32MJ	A320-214	7215	ex OE-LMO, dd 04.07.25, lsd fr CMB Financial Leasing

Hainan Airlines [HU/CHH 'Hainan']

B-225R	B737-8	64318	ex N40221, N4022T, ff 15.05.25, dd 29.07.25
B-225V	B737-8	65218	ff 22.06.25, dd 31.07.25, lsd fr CDB Aviation

Shandong Airlines [SC/CDG 'Shandong']

B-20E2	B737-8	61456	ex N245BE, N1800B, N1786B, ff 10.01.20, dd 11.07.25

Shenzhen Airlines [ZH/CSZ 'Shenzhen Air']

B-32LZ	A320-251n	12566	ex F-WWIZ, ff 11.07.25, dd 25.07.25

Spring Airlines [9S/CQH 'Air Spring']

B-32MX	A320-251n	12675	ex B-000C, ff 23.05.25, dd 31.07.25, lsd fr BoComm Leasing

Xiamen Airlines [MX/CXA 'Xiamen Air']

B-226Z	B737-8	43840	ex N5515R, N5573B, N4022T, ff 07.01.22, dd 11.07.25

Tigerair Taiwan [IT/TTW 'Smart Cat']

B-50029	A320-271n	12690	ex F-WWBQ, ff 11.06.25, dd 14.07.25 & reg'd 23.07.25, lsd fr ICBC Leasing

Pacific Coastal Airlines [8P/PCO 'Pasco']

C-GPCO	Beech 1900D	UE-67	ex N567MA, reg'd 13.08.25, ferried Mid-Way Regional – Calgary

Summit Air [SUT 'Summit']

C-GBUU	DHC-8 106	227	ret fr North Star Air lease & reg'd 05.08.25

JetSMART [JA/JAT 'Rocksmart']

CC-AWN	A320-271n	9463	ret fr JetSMART Argentina 07.08.25, lsd fr China Aircraft Leasing Corp

Air Arabia Maroc [3O/MAC 'Arabia Maroc']

9H-SLJ	A320-214	3880	ex EI-GVY, dd 04.08.25 & entered service same day, lsd fr/op by SmartLynx Malta

Royal Air Maroc [AT/RAM 'Royalair Maroc']

CN-RHD	B737-8	43350	ff 11.06.25, dd 14.07.25, lsd fr Air Lease Corp
CN-RHE	B737-8	66444	ex N4022H, N4022T, ff 24.06.25, dd 23.07.25, lsd fr Air Lease Corp
YL-LDU	A320-232	6306	ex 9H-SZH, dd 18.07.25 & entered service same day, lsd fr/op by SmartLynx

Eurowings [EW/EWG 'Eurowings']

9H-AMM	A320-232	3125	ex LZ-BHI, dd 31.07.25 & entered service 01.08.25, lsd fr/op by Avion Express Malta

Lufthansa City Airlines [VL/LHX 'Cityair']

D-AIJR	A320-271n	12656	ex F-WWTK, ff 11.06.25, dd 29.07.25 to Lufthansa, named 'Oberstdorf'

Air Nostrum [YW/ANE 'Nostru Air']

EC-OOQ	CRJ.1000EL	19014	ex 9H-AJZ, dd 08.25 & entered service 02.08.25

Binter Canarias [NT/IBB 'Binter']

EC-ONG	ERJ190-400	19020175	reg'd 30.07.25

Iberia [IB/IBE 'Iberia']

EC-NAZ	A320-271n	8648	ex F-WWDC, dd 21.08.25, lsd fr Fly Leasing
EC-OOL	A350-941	741	ex F-WZGE, ff 03.07.25, dd 28.07.25, named 'ENE'
G-POWM	A320-232	2564	ex 4R-ABJ, dd 31.07.25 & entered service 01.08.25, lsd fr/op by Titan Airways

Plus Ultra Líneas Aéreas [PU/PUE 'Spanish']

EC-OAQ	A330-203	901	ret fr Air Algérie lease & ferried Algiers – Madrid 24.08.25

Swiftair [WT/SWT 'Swift']

EC-HLN	B737-86N(F)	28619	ex LZ-HLN, dd 25.08.25, lsd fr/op for DHL

Aer Lingus [EI/EIN 'Shamrock']

EI-NSH	A320-251n	12663	ex F-WWTX, ff 11.07.25, dd 31.07.25 & reg'd same day, named 'McCuilinn'

Caspian Airlines [CPN 'Caspian']

EP-SOL	B737-3U3	28742	ex T7-L356, dd 16.08.25

Fly Kish Airlines [TKN 'Toukan']

EP-LEF	B737-33V	29338	ret fr Varesh Airlines lease 16.05.25 & returned to service 02.08.25

FLYONE [5F/FIA 'Fia Airlines']

ER-00003	A321-211	6979	ex VP-CFY, dd 12.08.25, lsd fr Avolon Aerospace, named 'Edinet'
ER-00005	A320-214	5934	ex RP-C3277, dd 21.08.25 Kuala Lumpur KUL – Chișinău, named 'Straseni'

Key to Abbreviations

a/c	aircraft
als	airlines
awys	airways
bf	bought from
b/u	broken up/scrapped
canx	cancelled
cls	colours
cn	manufacturer's construction/serial number
cnvrtd	converted
dbf	destroyed by fire
dbr	damaged beyond repair
dd	delivery date
ex	previous reg'n
ff	first flight
frtr	freighter
lrf	last revenue flight
lsd fr	leased from
lsd to	leased to
msn	see cn
ntu	not taken up
oo	on order
op	operated
pax	passenger
pwfu	permanently withdrawn from use
reg'd	registered
reg'n	registration
ret fr	returned from
ret to	returned to
rr	re-registered
rts	return to service
sb	sold by
scr	scrapped/broken up
st	sold to
std	stored
tba	to be advised
unk	unknown
wfu	withdrawn from use
w/o	written off/destroyed

We welcome any feedback on this listing

(The listing is alphabetical with reference to the registration of the country of origin. Columns indicate the registration, type, construction number and notes.)

Terra Avia [T8/TVR 'Terravia']			
ER-BOY	B777-219ER	34379	ex N846KW, dd 07.07.25, ferried Kansas City MCI – Sharjah 14.08.25
Ethiopian Airlines [ET/ETH 'Ethiopian']			
ET-BAK	B737-8	62462	ex N4022T, ff 09.06.25, dd 11.07.25,
Air France [AF/AFR 'Air France']			
F-HPNU	A220-300	55375	ex C-FOVX, reg'd 19.08.25, full dely details next month
F-HUVS	A350-941	739	ex F-WZNL, ff 16.06.25, dd 11.07.25 & reg'd JPA No.320 Cp Ltd & Others 11.07.25, named 'Colmar'
CMA CGM Air Cargo [2C/CMA 'French Cargo']			
F-HMRO	B777-F	68187	ff 25.06.25, dd 16.07.25 & reg'd 18.07.25
Air Austral [UU/REU 'Reunion']			
9H-HFK	A330-223	874	ex LZ-AWZ, dd 06.08.25 Châeauroux – Paris CDG & entered service same day, lsd fr/op by Hi Fly Malta
Aircalin [SB/ACI 'Aircalin']			
9H-HFA	A330-343E	1779	ex 2-HHLL, dd 29.06.25 & entered service 01.07.25, lsd fr/op by Hi Fly Malta
Ascend Airways [YD/SYG 'Synergy']			
G-MULR	B737-8	62093	ex 9H-CHA, reg'd 01.08.25, lsd fr BoComm Leasing, ferried Warsaw – Stansted 05.08.25
Jet2.com [LS/EXS 'Chanex']			
G-HLYM	A321-251nx	12667	ex D-AZAX, ff 16.07.25, dd 23.07.25 & reg'd same day, lsd fr Avolon Aerospace
G-SUNP	A321-251nx	12599	ex D-AVZQ, ff 12.06.25, dd 03.07.25 & reg'd same day, named 'Jet2 Halkidiki'
G-SUNS	A321-251nx	12646	ex D-AXXS, ff 19.06.25, dd 22.07.25 & reg'd same day, named 'Jet2 Almería'
G-SUNU	A321-251nx	12720	ex D-AXXX, ff 07.07.25, dd 30.07.25 & reg'd same day, named 'Jet2 Venice'
Wizz Air UK [W9/WUK 'Wizz Go']			
G-XLRB	A321-271ny	12437	ex D-AZAC, ff 03.07.25, dd 21.07.25 to Wizz Air & reg'd same day
Arajet [DM/DWI 'Dominican']			
HI1118	B737-8	68079	ex N4022T, ff 22.05.25, dd 22.07.25
Eastar Jet [ZE/ESR 'Eastar']			
HL8715	B737-8	67921	ex N4022L, N4022T, ff 24.06.25, dd 28.07.25 & reg'd same day
Jeju Air [7C/JJA 'Jejuair']			
HL8555	B737-8	66543	ex N4022T, ff 19.06.25, dd 17.07.25 & reg'd same day
Korean Air [KE/KAL 'Korean']			
HL8571	B787-10	66881	ff 17.06.25, dd 03.07.25 & reg'd same day
Ezy Airlines			
HS-PUI	Cessna 208B/EX	208B5873	ex N9000F, dd 07.25, ferried Moundridge – Hua Hin as N9000F 26.06-07.07.25
Thai Airways [TG/THA 'Thai']			
HS-TEX	A330-343E	1231	ex G-VINE, dd 04.08.25, lsd fr Avolon Aerospace, named 'Ratchaburi', ferried Heathrow – Bangkok BKK 06.08.25
Thai Lion Air [SL/TLM 'Mentari']			
HS-LGW	B737-8GP	37295	ex PK-LJW, dd 27.08.25 Batam – Bangkok DMK, lsd fr Macquarie AirFinance
Thai SmartLynx Airlines [THB 'Blue Wings']			
HS-SXA	A320-233	5089	ex 2-VSLP, dd 22.08.25 Denpasar – Bangkok DMK, lsd fr Asia Pacific Leasing
flyadeal [F3/FAD 'Adeal']			
HZ-FBN	A320-251n	12544	ex F-WWDC, ff 19.06.25, dd 16.07.25, lsd fr Macquarie AirFinance
Saudia [SV/SVA 'Saudi']			
HZ-ASAN	A321-251nx	12717	ex D-AVXP, ff 02.07.25, dd 16.07.25
Japan Airlines [JL/JAL 'Japanair']			
JA10WJ	A350-1041	729	ex F-WZHC, ff 13.06.25, dd 15.07.25 & reg'd 16.07.25
Peach [MM/APJ 'Air Peach']			
JA227P	A320-251n	12681	ex F-WWIN, ff 10.07.25, dd 22.07.25 & reg'd 23.07.25
Starflyer [7G/SFJ 'Starflyer']			
JA30MC	A320-251n	12649	ex F-WWTN, ff 09.07.25, dd 23.07.25 & reg'd 24.07.25, lsd fr SMBC Aviation Capital
Royal Jordanian [RJ/RJA 'Jordanian']			
JY-RAH	A320-271n	12523	ex F-WWTV, ff 20.06.25, dd 11.07.25, lsd fr Avolon Aerospace, named 'Ghawr Safi'
JY-RAK	A320-271n	12643	ex F-WWIB, ff 25.06.25, dd 10.07.25, lsd fr SMBC Aviation Capital, named 'Amman', in 'oneworld' colours
Aerolineas Argentinas [AR/ARG 'Argentina']			
LV-KNQ	B737-8	68126	ex N4022L, N4022T, ff 01.07.25, dd 29.07.25
Heston Airlines [HN/HST 'Heston']			
LY-FJI	A320-232	2157	ret fr Norwegian Air Sweden AOC after lease
Jump Air [JUP 'Jump Air']			
LY-JUB	ATR 72-212A (500)	767	ex 2-XNIV, dd 08.08.25, lsd fr Willis Lease, lsd to/op for Precision Air
ABX Air [GB/ABX 'Abex']			
N745AX	B767-232(F)	22222	ex OY-RLB, dd 11.08.25 Tampa – Cincinnati, lsd fr Cargo Aircraft Management
Allegiant Air [G4/AAY 'Allegiant']			
N823NV	B737-8200	68020	ex N4022S, N4022T, ff 19.05.25, dd 14.07.25 & reg'd 07.08.25, ferried Boeing Field – Goodyear 14.07.25 & parked
N824NV	B737-8200	67997	ff 06.06.25, dd 28.07.25 & reg'd 20.08.25, ferried Boeing Field – Goodyear 28.07.25 & parked
Alpine Air Express [5A/AIP 'Alpine Air']			
N103SF	Beech 1900C-1	UC-103	ex N103SX, reg'd 09.08.25
N124GP	Beech 1900C	UB-23	ex N23VK, reg'd 22.08.25
N149SF	Beech 1900C-1	UC-149	ex N575X, reg'd 09.8.25
American Airlines [AA/AAL 'American']			
N300NY	A321-253ny	11520	ex F-WXAA, ff 31.03.25 as D-AZAB, dd 25.07.25, rr F-WXAA 28.07.25 & ferried Hamburg XFW – Ostrava 29.07.25 for seat installation

N310UM	B737-8	44514	ex N4022T, ff 15.05.25, dd 15.07.25 & reg'd same day, fleet # '3UM'
N843AN	B787-9	66008	ex N20163, ff 22.02.25, dd 29.07.25 & reg'd 30.07.25 to Wilmington Trust Co Owner Trustee, fleet # '8MB'
Breeze Airways [MX/MXY 'Moxy']			
N251BZ	A220-300	55351	ex C-GPMU, ff 13.06.25, dd 15.07.25 & reg'd 17.07.25 to Bank of Utah Trustee
Delta Air Lines [DL/DAL 'Delta']			
N438DX	A330-941	2101	ex F-WWYH, ff 03.07.25, dd 31.07.25 & reg'd same day, fleet # '3438'
N554DT	A321-271nx	12142	ex D-AXXY, ff 03.06.25, dd 01.07.25, fleet # '5054', rr F-WJKF & ferried Hamburg XFW – Francazal 03.07.25 & parked
N590DT	A321-271nx	12337	ex F-WZMU, ff 07.07.25, dd 17.07.25 & reg'd 18.07.25, fleet # '5090'
N597DT	A321-271nx	12650	ex F-WWSM, ff 1.06.25, dd 21.07.25, fleet # '5097', ferried Toulouse – Francazal 21.07.25 & parked
FedEx Feeder			
C-FWZE	Cessna 408	408-0045	reg'd 14.08.25 & ferried Beech Field – Edmonton 19.08.25, op by Morningstar Air Express
N780FX	Cessna 408	408-0044	ff 04.03.25, dd 12.08.25, to be op by Mountain Air Cargo
Frontier Airlines [F9/FFT 'Frontier Flight']			
N671FR	A321-271nx	12563	ex F-WZMH, ff 16.07.25, dd 24.07.25 & reg'd same day to UMB Bank NA Trustee, named 'Honey the Badger'
jetBlue Airways [B6/JBU 'Jet Blue']			
N3258J	A220-300	55348	ex C-GPOS, ff 28.05.25, dd 02.07.25 & reg'd same day, named 'Loving Blue Is Easy'
N3261J	A220-300	55359	ex C-GPSW, ff 10.07.25, dd 29.07.25 & reg'd 30.07.25, named 'Merci Bluecoup'
N3275J	A220-300	55373	ex C-FOVG, ff 07.07.25, dd 16.07.25 & reg'd same day, named 'Goody Blue Shoes'
Kallita Charters II [K5/KII 'Dragster']			
N307GT	B737-4H6(F)	26455	ex N496SA, dd 28.08.25 Oscoda – Willow Run after storage since 02.08.24, lsd fr/op for DHL
Pacific Air Charters			
N1202P	Tecnam P2012	056/US	reg'd 18.08.25
Phoenix Air [PHA 'Grey Bird']			
N189PA	Saab 340A	340A-038	ex SP-KPL, reg'd 07.08.25, ferried Warsaw – Cartersville 12-14.08.25
SkyWest Airlines [OO/SKW 'Skywest']			
N246LR	CRJ.900LR	15239	ex C-GUHT, reg'd 27.08.25, parked Tucson
N329MS	CRJ.900LR	15126	ex A6-HLS, reg'd 27.08.25, parked Tucson
N943LR	CRJ.900ER	15068	ex EI-DOU, reg'd 27.08.25, parked Tucson
N948LR	CRJ.900ER	15118	ex EI-DVR, reg'd 06.08.25
N951LR	CRJ.900ER	15123	ex EI-DVT, reg'd 27.08.25, parked Tucson
Southwest Airlines [WN/SWA 'Southwest']			
N8963Q	B737-8	42622	ex N4022T, ff 14.06.25, dd 01.07.25 & reg'd same day
United Airlines [UA/UAL 'United']			
N14539	A321-271nx	12589	ex F-WZMJ, ff 23.07.25, dd 30.07.25 & reg'd 31.07.25, fleet # '4539'
N14540	A321-271nx	12489	ex F-WZMX, ff 27.06.25, dd 11.07.25 & reg'd same day to Wilmington Trust Co Trustee, lsd fr China Aircraft Leasing Group, fleet # '4540'
N14544	A321-271nx	12671	ex F-WWSS, ff 09.07.25, dd 24.07.25 & reg'd same day, fleet # '4544', ferried Toulouse – Newquay 07.08.25 & parked
N14546	A321-271nx	12672	ex F-WWSR, ff 16.07.25, dd 30.07.25 & reg'd same day, fleet # '4546', ferried Toulouse – Newquay 13.08.25 & parked
UPS Airlines [5X/UPS 'Ups']			
N910UP	B767-300F	67980	ff 02.07.25, dd 24.07.25 & reg'd 22.08.25
Austrian Airlines [OS/AUA 'Austrian']			
SE-MKE	ATR 72-212A (600)	1348	ex F-WWEH, dd 30.07.25 & entered service same day, lsd fr/op by Braathens Regional Airways
SE-MKH	ATR 72-212A (600)	1372	ex F-WWEI, dd 17.07.25 & entered service same day, lsd fr/op by Braathens Regional Airways
DAT [DX/DTR 'Danish']			
OY-RUA	ATR 72-212A (500)	822	ret fr Emerald Airlines lease
Sunclass Airlines [DK/VKG 'Viking']			
OY-VKE	A321-251nx	12679	ex D-AVZN, ff 04.07.25, dd 22.07.25, lsd fr Aviation Capital Group
KLM Cityhopper [WA/KLC 'City']			
F-HBQB	ERJ190-100STD	19000655	ex PH-EXA, dd 08.08.25 & entered service same day, lsd fr/op by Air France Hop!
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines [KL/KLM 'Klm']			
PH-AXI	A321-252nx	12600	ex D-AVYO, ff 13.06.25, dd 03.07.25 & reg'd same day, named 'Oranjetipje / Orange Tip'
Martinair [MP/MPH 'Martinair']			
PH-MPS	B747-412(BCF)	24066	ex T7-L066, reg'd 27.08.25, ferried Hahn – Amsterdam 30.08.25 for return to service
Transavia [HV/TRA 'Transavia']			
PH-YHD	A321-252nx	12652	ex D-AYAD, ff 09.07.25, dd 24.07.25 & reg'd 25.07.25
PH-YHS	A321-251nx	12602	ex D-AVZV, ff 26.06.25, dd 15.07.25 & reg'd same day, lsd fr SMBC Aviation Capital
Winair [WM/WIA 'Windward']			
PJ-WIY	ATR 42-500	649	ex HK-5199, dd 08.25, lsd fr Abelo
FlyJaya [FHS]			
PK-FJC	ATR 72-212A (500)	857	ex RP-C7257, dd 29.08.25 Bandung – Yogyakarta
Garuda Indonesia [GA/GIA 'Indonesia']			
PK-GDC	B737-8	63386	ex N5573B, N4022T, ff 27.02.25, dd 16.07.25, lsd fr BOC Aviation

Airliner Deliveries

The latest commercial aircraft deliveries from manufacturers and lessors

French freight airline CMA CGM Air Cargo took delivery of its fifth Boeing 777F, F-HMRO (c/n 68187) on July 16. The widebody is powered by two General Electric GE90s
AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/DIPANKAR BHAKTA

CMA CGM AIR CARGO
CMA CGM

Pelita Air Service [IP/PAS 'Pelita']

PK-PWO	A320-214	5811	ex 2-DUSC, dd 06.08.25, lsd fr Maverick Aviation, ferried Hyderabad – Jakarta CGK 06-07.08.25

Amazonaves Táxi Aéreo

PS-AMY	Cessna 208B/EX	208B5883	reg'd 16.07.25, ferried Meridian – Manaus MAO 24-30.06.25 on delivery

LATAM Airlines Brasil [JJ/TAM 'Tam']

PS-LHE	A320-271n	8877	ex VT-IZW, dd 14.08.25, lsd fr Jakcson Square Aviation, ferried Hyderabad – São Carlos 13-16.08.25

Helifix Operations

P2-GXZ	Cessna 208	20800714	ex N856RA, dd 07.25

Lao Airlines [QV/LAO 'Lao']

RDPL-34266	ARJ21-700	10171	ex B-001J, ff 16.02.25, dd 01.09.25

Cebu Pacific Air [5J/CEB 'Cebu Air']

RP-C3911	A330-941	2095	ex F-WWYJ, ff 19.06.25, dd 16.07.25
RP-C4262	A320-214	5515	ret fr flyadeal lse & ferried Riyadh – Clark 21-23.08.25
RP-C4263	A320-214	5179	as RP-C4262

Royal Air Philippines [RW/RYL 'Doublegold']

RP-C9866	A321-231(F)	2303	ex 9H-CGI, dd 30.08.25 Haikou – Clark, lsd fr/op for Nanning Communications Investment Group

BRA – Braathens Regional Airways [TF/BRX 'Braathens']

SE-MNU	ATR 72-212A (600)	1724	ex F-WWEZ, ff 07.08.25, dd 22.08.25 & reg'd same day to NAC Aviation 53 Ltd, lsd fr DAE Capital, lsd to/op for SAS in SAS colours

Norwegian Air Sweden AOC [D8/NSZ 'Rednose']

SE-NAC	B737-8	66303	ff 23.06.25, dd 25.07.25 & reg'd same day to Jackson Square Aviation Ireland Ltd
SE-RTU	B737-8	43604	ex N4022T, ff 08.06.25, dd 28.07.25 & reg'd same day to Wilmington Trust SP Services (Dublin) Ltd
SE-RTX	B737-8	43622	ff 08.06.25, dd 30.07.25 & reg'd same day to Wilmington Trust SP Services (Dublin) Ltd
SE-RTY	B737-8	62921	ex N40220, N4022T, ff 23.06.25, dd 31.07.25 & reg'd same day to Wilmington Trust SP Services (Dublin) Ltd

SAS Link [SVS 'Discover']

SE-RSZ	ERJ190-200LR	19000727	ex B-3238, reg'd 04.08.25 to Jin Shan 55 Ireland Co Ltd (BoComm Leasing)

SAS Scandinavian Airlines [SK/SAS 'Scandinavian']

EI-HSC	CRJ.900LR	15084	ex OE-LON, dd 02.08.25 & entered service same day, lsd fr/op by CityJet

Buzz [RR/RYS 'Magic Sun']

SP-RZT	B737-8200	67122	ex N4022T, ff 17.07.25, dd 30.07.25 to Ryanair

Badr Airlines [J4/BDR 'Badr Air']

ST-BAT	CRJ.200LR	8045	ex N602XJ, dd 10.07.25 & entered service 01.08.25, lsd fr Alberta Aviation Capital

Tarco Air [3T/TQQ 'Aviation Tarco']

C5-FBN	B737-8AL	35070	ex N276EA, dd 27.08.25

AJet [VF/TKJ 'Anatolia']

TC-LBM	A320-232	5604	ex HA-LWR, dd 31.07.25 Katowice – Istanbul SAW as THY6830, lsd fr Tokyo Century Corp
TC-LBO	A320-271n	8832	ex VT-IZU, dd 15.08.25 Hyderabad – Istanbul ISL, lsd fr AviLease
TC-LBT	A320-271n	11111	ex EI-HKW, dd 19.08.25 Osrava – Istanbul ISL after storage since 26.10.24, lsd fr Merx Aviation

Pegasus Airlines [PC/PGT 'Sunturk']

TC-RFO	A321-251nx	12515	ex F-WWAV, ff 03.07.25, dd 22.07.25, named 'Alisa'
TC-RFP	A321-251nx	12542	ex F-WWSJ, ff 03.07.25, dd 25.07.25, named 'Rena'
TC-RFS	A321-251nx	12669	ex D-AZWO, ff 22.07.25, dd 31.07.25, named 'Belinda'

SunExpress [XQ/SXS 'Sunexpress']

TC-SMS	B737-8	65328	ex N4022T, ff 09.06.25, dd 09.07.25
TC-SMT	B737-8	65331	ff 23.06.25, dd 18.07.25

Turkish Airlines [TK/THY 'Turkish']

TC-LBP	A320-232	6086	ex HA-LWZ, dd 25.08.25 Budapest – Istanbul SAW, lsd fr FPG Group
TC-LHF	A350-941	734	ex F-WLXV, ff 12.06.2, dd 18.07.25
TC-LMC	B787-9	65824	ff 25.06.25, dd 15.07.25

ULS Airlines Cargo [GO/KZU 'Universal Cargo']

TC-GOU	A330-343(F)	349	ex N803CM, dd 11.08.25 Istanbul ISL – Istanbul IST, lsd fr Cargo Aircraft Management

Camair-Co [QC/CRC 'Camairco']

5N-NGA	B737-3H4	27721	ex 5N-DNB, dd 21.08.25 & entered service 22.08.25, lssd fr/op by NG-Eagle

Royal Airways

TT-ROB	ATR 42-300	230	ex TT-ABE, dd 10.03.25

Centrum Air

UK32132	A321-253nx	12499	ex D-AZYV, ff 08.07.25, dd 18.07.25 to My Freighter

SCAT Airlines [DV/VSV 'Vlasta']

UP-B3743	B737-8	61827	ex N4022A, N4022T, ff 31.05.25, dd 22.07.25

Alliance Airlines [QQ/UTY 'Unity']

N266JB	ERJ190-100AR	19000054	ex PT-SID, reg'd 04.08.25 to TVPX Aircraft Solutions Inc Trustee, std Macon
VH-A2K	ERJ190-100AR	19000040	ex N239JB, reg'd 04.08.25, adds to last month's section
VH-A2S	ERJ190-100AR	19000082	ex N274JB, reg'd 26.08.25, was reg'd 31.07.25 as N274JB to TVPX Aircraft Solutions Inc Trustee
VH-FNU	Fokker 100	11373	ex OO-TUF, reg'd 26.08.25

ASL Airlines Australia [PH/SFZ 'Skyforce']

VH-RAN	B737-86N(BCF)	28595	ex 2-BTPO, reg'd 27.08.25 to UMB Bank NA, lsd fr Babcock & Brown, ferried Teeside – Brisbane as 2-BTPO 22-25.08.25

Hardy Aviation

VH-UOF	Cessna 208B/EX	208B5889	ex N366QT, reg'd 21.08.25, ferried Merced – Darwin 03-08.08.25 as N366QT & reg'n canx 14.08.25

Hinterland Aviation

VH-XDU	Cessna 208B	208B2113	ex XA-XPL, reg'd 08.08.25

Jetstar Airways [JQ/JST 'Jetstar']

VH-A5E	A320-251n	12556	ex F-WWIY, ff 21.06.25, dd 03.07.25 to Qantas Airways
VH-X3D	A320-232	4872	ex 9V-JSM, reg'd 06.08.25 to Qantas Airways Ltd
VH-X3E	A320-232	4914	ex 9V-JSN, reg'd 08.08.25 to Qantas Airways Ltd
VH-X3F	A320-232	5305	ex 9V-JSO, reg'd 19.08.25 to ACS Aero 4 Beta US LLC
VH-X3L	A320-232	5708	ex 9V-JSU, reg'd 11.08.25 to Qantas Airways Ltd
VH-X3P	A320-232	4879	ex 9V-JSX, reg'd 27.08.25 to Qantas Airways Ltd

Maroomba Airlines [KN]

VH-8PG	DHC-8 311	548	ex C-GAQN, reg'd 15.08.25 to MPM Leasing Pty Ltd, ferried Malta – Perth 29.07-03.08.25 as C-GAQN

Qantas Airways [QF/QFA 'Qantas']

VH-XZQ	B737-8SA	44227	ex 9V-MGK, reg'd 22.08.25
VH-84N	DHC-8 402	4483	ex C-FWEZ, reg'd 12.08.25 to Qantas Airways, named 'Devenport', (C-FWEZ canx 11.08.25)

Virgin Australia Airlines [VA/VOZ 'Kanga']

VH-8II	B737-8	65121	ff 01.07.25, dd 23.07.25, lsd fr Aviation Capital Group, named 'Aldinga Beach'
VH-8IJ	B737-8	65126	ff 10.07.25, dd 31.07.25, lsd fr Aviation Capital Group, named 'Cape Tribulation'

Key to Abbreviations

a/c	aircraft
als	airlines
awys	airways
bf	bought from
b/u	broken up/scrapped
canx	cancelled
cls	colours
cn	manufacturer's construction/serial number
cnvrtd	converted
dbf	destroyed by fire
dbr	damaged beyond repair
dd	delivery date
ex	previous reg'n
ff	first flight
frtr	freighter
lrf	last revenue flight
lsd fr	leased from
lsd to	leased to
msn	see cn
ntu	not taken up
oo	on order
op	operated
pax	passenger
pwfu	permanently withdrawn from use
reg'd	registered
reg'n	registration
ret fr	returned from
ret to	returned to
rr	re-registered
rts	return to service
sb	sold by
scr	scrapped/broken up
st	sold to
std	stored
tba	to be advised
unk	unknown
wfu	withdrawn from use
w/o	written off/destroyed

SUN PhouQoc Airways [SPQ]

VN-A281	A321-251nx	12578	ex D-AVXR, ff 01.07.25, dd 25.07.25 to NAS Aviation Services, lsd fr AerCap

Vietravel Airlines [VU/VAG 'Vietravel Air']

VN-A136	A320-232	8696	ex N695NK, dd 08.08.25, purch fr GA Telesis

Air India Express [IX/AXB 'Express India']

VT-BWV	B737-8	61712	ex N57001, N253BE, N3134C, N1786B, ff 18.07.19, dd 16.07.25
VT-RTD	A321-251nx	11183	ex D-AYAH, dd 09.08.25 Hosur – Bangalore, lsd fr AerCap

IndiGo [6E/IGO 'IFLY']

VT-NCP	A321-251nx	12476	ex F-WWSK, ff 26.06.25, dd 29.07.25
VT-NCQ	A321-251nx	12493	ex F-WWAD, ff 19.06.25, dd 08.07.25
VT-NCW	A321-251nx	12647	ex D-AZAS, ff 11.07.25, dd 30.07.25
9H-SLD	A320-214	3396	ex OE-LME, dd 21.08.25 & entered service 22.08.25, lsd fr/op by SmartLynx Malta

Star Air [S5/SDG 'Hi Star']

VT-GSM	ERJ170-200LR	17000347	ex SX-MTO, dd 11.08.25, lsd fr Azorra Aviation

Aeroméxico [AM/AMX 'Aeromexico']

N499AM	B737-9	68129	ex N4022T, N4022L, ff 22.05.25, dd 10.07.25 & reg'd same day to UMB Bank NA Trustee
N569AM	B737-9	68130	ex N4022T, ff 15.06.25, dd 23.07.25 to UMB Bank NA Trustee
XA-AMD	B737-8	62963	ff 02.07.25, dd 31.07.25

Mexicana [XN/MXA 'Mexicana']

XA-MXB	ERJ190-400	19020189	ex PR-ENX, dd 08.08.25, ferried São José dos Campos – México City 08-09.08.25
XA-MXC	ERJ190-400	19020193	ex PR-EKB, dd 22.08.25, ferried São José dos Campos – México City 22-23.08.25

Volaris [Y4/VOI 'Volaris']

XA-VUU	A320-271n	12628	ex F-WWDY, ff 20.06.25, dd 10.07.25, st Jackson Square Aviation on dely & lsd back
XA-VUW	A320-271n	12651	ex F-WWDV, ff 17.06.25, dd 07.07.25

Myanmar Airways International [8M/MMA 'Myanmar']

XY-ALZ	A319-112	4038	ex VP-CEU, dd 08.08.25, lsd fr FTAI Aviation

Air Burkina [2J/VBW 'Burkina']

5A-GRR	B737-341	25048	ex UR-CRM, dd 27.06.25 & entered service 02.07.25, lsd fr/op by Ghadames Air
6V-AJD	B737-530	25271	ex YR-AMD, dd 16.08.25 & entered service same day, lsd fr/op by Transair

Hellojets [H3/HLJ 'Hellojets']

YR-RAM	A320-232	3782	ex VT-INX, dd 07.08.25 Tel Aviv – Bucharest OTP, lsd fr Aviator Capital, to be rr YR-HAC

Aeropostal [VH/ALV 'Aeropostal']

YV3498	DC-9-82	49987	ex YV-640T, dd 08.25

Air New Zealand [NZ/ANZ 'New Zealand']

ZK-MZH	ATR 72-212A (600)	1721	ex F-WWEW, ff 31.07.25, dd 01.09.25
ZK-NNI	A321-271nx	12593	ex D-AVXZ, ff 04.07.25, dd 28.07.25 & reg'd same day, lsd fr SMBC Aviation Capital

FlySafair [FA/SFR]

ZS-SJI	B737-86N	60689	ex N607AG, dd 07.08.25, lsd fr AerCap, ferried Tainan – Johannesburg as N607AG 01.08.25 & reg'n canx 07.08.25

Air Mauritius [MK/MAU 'Air Mauritius']

3B-NCU	ATR 72-212A (600)	1316	ex OY-NZJ, dd 20.08.25, lsd fr DAE Capital, ferried Francazal – Mauritius 20-22.08.25 after storage since 31.10.23, named 'Les Mascareignes'

Azerbaijan Airlines [J2/AHY 'Azal']

LY-MAU	A320-214	6347	ex A7-LAA, dd 18.08.25 Vilnius – Baku & entered service 20.08.25, lsd fr/op by Heston Airlines

Arkia – Israeli Airlines [IZAIZ 'Arkia']

YL-LDY	A321-231	3522	ex LY-BLX, dd 23.08.25 Chaâteauroux – Tel Aviv & entered service same day, lsd fr/op by SmartLynx

Israir Airlines [6H/ISR 'Israir']

UR-WRY	A319-112	1745	ex LY-FAA, dd 26.07.25 Bratislava Tel Aviv & entered service same day, lsd fr/op by Windrose Airlines
9A-BTH	A320-214	1454	ex HK-4905, dd 02.08.25 Zagreb – Tel Aviv & entered service same day, lsd fr/op by Trade Air
9A-BTM	A320-216	3921	ex EI-DTG, dd 18.08.25 & entered service 20.08.25, lsd fr/op by Trade Air

Precision Air [PW/PRF 'Precision Air']

LY-JUB	ATR 72-212A (500)	767	ex 2-XNIV, dd 07.08.25 & entered service 09.08.25, lsd fr/op by Jump Air

Air Peace [P4/APK 'Peace Bird']

5N-CER	ERJ190-100AR	19000599	ex 5Y-FFG, dd 06.08.25 Nairobi – Lagos, ferried to Tallinn 30-31.08.25 for work

Cally Air

5N-CRA	CRJ.1000EL	19004	ex PH-PKE, dd 30.07.25, (PH-PKE canx 30.07.25), adds to last month's section

Skyward Express [OW/SEW 'Skyward Express']

5Y-SKH	DHC-8 402	4046	ex C-FILR, dd 21.08.25

Yemenia [IY/IYE 'Yemeni']

7O-AFH	A320-233	5050	ex 2-TECY, dd 15.08.25 Amman – Aden, lsd fr AFG Germany, named 'Awsan'

Domestic Airlines

7T-VCD	B737-8ZQ	40887	dd 20.08.25
7T-VCN	DHC-8 402	4173	ex C-FMKF, dd 20.08.25

Bridges Air Cargo [5B/BRD 'Bridges']

9H-BRD	ERJ190-100AR(F)	19000360	ex N986TA, dd 22.08.25, lsd fr Regional One, ferried São José dos Campos – Maastricht as N986TA 31.07-01.08.25

Malta MedAir [MT/MMO 'Malit']

9H-MSB	A320-214	4357	ex 5A-MSB, dd 04.08.25, op for MedSky Airways

SmartLynx Malta [2N/LYX 'Malta Cat']

9H-IVO	A320-214	3644	ex ES-SAB, dd 14.08.25 Amman – Tirana, lsd fr AerCap

Wizz Air Malta [W4/WMT 'Wizz Malta']

9H-WMG	A321-271nx	12639	ex F-WWSQ, ff 16.06.25, dd 18.07.25 to Wizz Air, st Jackson Square Aviation on dely & lsd back to Wizz Air Malta
9H-XLA	A321-271ny	12346	ex D-AYAZ, ff 02.04.25, dd 15.07.25 to Wizz Air

Kuwait Airways [KU/KAC 'Kuwaiti']

9K-AQB	A321-251nx	12507	ex D-AYAY, ff 30.05.25, dd 16.07.25, named 'Wafra'

Malaysia Airlines [MH/MAS 'Malaysian']

9M-MVL	B737-8	43351	ex N4022T, ff 13.06.25, dd 18.07.25, lsd fr Air Lease Corp
9M-MVN	B737-8	43355	ex NN4026Q, N4022T, ff 07.07.25, dd 31.07.25, lsd fr Air Lease Corp

Scoot [TR/TGW 'Scooter']

9V-OFL	B787-8	60265	ff 17.06.20, dd 03.07.25, named 'Don't Worry Be Happy'
9V-THH	ERJ190-300	19020191	ex PR-ENV, ff 12.07.25, dd 11.08.25, named 'Lil' Dreamer', ferried São José dos Campos – Singapore as PR-ENV 07-10.08.25
9V-TNH	A320-271n	12677	ex F-WWBB, ff 06.06.25, dd 22.07.25, named 'Yellow Cruiser'

RwandAir [WB/RWD 'Rwandair']

9XR-WT	B737-8H6	40148	ex 2-TONY, dd 08.25 & entered service 14.08.25, lsd fr AviLease
9XR-WU	B737-8H6	40149	ex 9M-MSG, dd 26.08.25, lsd fr AviLease

We welcome any feedback on this listing

(The listing is alphabetical with reference to the registration of the country of origin. Columns indicate the registration, type, construction number and notes.)

G-MULR
← D ↖ B ← 09
27 →

UK ACMI operator Ascend Airways added a fifth Boeing 737 MAX 8, G-MULR (c/n 62093), on August 1. The ex-Garuda Indonesia jet was previously operated by SmartLynx Malta
AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/WOCO

The latest news from maintenance, repair and overhaul providers

By Nigel Pittaway

StandardAero offers exchange CFM56-7Bs

StandardAero has announced the expansion of its portfolio to include engine interchange solutions for CFM International CFM56-7B engines.

Under the new programme, StandardAero will provide a CFM56-7B engine upon taking delivery of an unserviceable example from any of its customers worldwide. Stellar Aviation Solutions, an Indian aviation company based in New Delhi, has already taken advantage of the scheme, swapping a time-expired powerplant for a CFM56-7B26/3 (including Quick Engine Change kit). The deal was completed in six weeks, allowing Stellar Aviation to assist with the immediate return of a Boeing 737-800 freighter to service.

Guillaume Limouzy, airline sales director for StandardAero's airlines and fleet business unit, commented: "StandardAero is delighted to expand its portfolio of CFM56-7B service offerings to our customers worldwide through the addition of exchange engine solutions. Working closely with our in-house asset management specialists and our CFM56-7B MRO facilities in Dallas and Winnipeg, we are able to provide customers such as Stellar Aviation with responsive engine solutions that meet StandardAero's rigorous quality standards."

StandardAero is an OEM-authorised service provider of CFM56-7B engines, with complete overhaul and test capabilities at two locations across North America.

Lufthansa Technik signs MRO contracts

cebu pacific

Separate contracts with India's IndiGo and Filipino carriers Cebu Pacific and PAL express (PALex) have been announced by Lufthansa Technik, covering a range of its services.

The contract with IndiGo expands Lufthansa Technik's presence in India by appointing it as the provider of technical services to deliver comprehensive lease return support. This will form part of long-term agreements between the two companies covering base maintenance and single-component MRO services for IndiGo's fleet of Airbus A320 Family airliners. Base maintenance services for the Gurugram-based carrier will be at its facilities in Sofia and the Philippines. In addition, it will offer dedicated single-component maintenance support from its workshops in Hamburg.

Parichay Datta, senior vice president of engineering and maintenance for IndiGo, said: "In times of capacity shortfalls due to supply chain challenges, we are placing strong emphasis on leased aircraft. These leases have proven invaluable in meeting demand and maintaining our strong market position. In this context, we are particularly excited to further expand our partnership with Lufthansa Technik, leveraging their expertise in aircraft lease return services."

A multi-year contract with PAL express in Manila was later announced, covering the supply of components for the carrier's A320 fleet. The service package will include component maintenance, MRO services, access to Lufthansa Technik's global spare parts chain and the establishment of a home base stock of components in Manila.

PAL express president Rabbi Vincent Ang said: "We are confident that Lufthansa Technik's comprehensive component support system will help us maintain operational excellence as we continue to grow and serve our passengers. Thanks to its world-class MRO services, PAL express stands poised to deliver even greater reliability and efficiency to our passengers. The availability of spare parts at our Manila base, backed by access to Lufthansa Technik's vast pool facilities in Hong Kong, Singapore, Hamburg and Frankfurt, ensures that aircraft are serviced promptly and kept flying."

Philippines-based low-cost carrier Cebu Pacific also announced that it had signed a support agreement in August for the supply of integrated consumables and expendables (C&E) for its Airbus A320, A321ceo/neo and A330neo aircraft.

Shevantha Weerasekera, VP of engineering and fleet management, noted: "Partnering with Lufthansa Technik for our C&E supply is a significant step forward in strengthening the reliability and efficiency of our operations. Their proven expertise, global reach and flexible service model give us the confidence that our fleet will be supported with the right materials at the right time." (Photo Lufthansa Technik)

Riyadh Air APU support deal

Air France Industries-KLM Engineering and Maintenance (AFI KLM E&M) subsidiary EPCOR and Saudi carrier Riyadh Aviation have signed a maintenance agreement for the carrier's APS5000 auxiliary power units (APUs) fitted to its fleet of Boeing 787s.

The comprehensive support services contract will see EPCOR providing MRO and modification services, as well as APS5000 availability services, on-wing support and line replaceable unit (LRU) coverage. In addition, EPCOR will utilise the predictive maintenance services of its Prognos system.

Martin Eiba, acting COO of Riyadh Air, explained: "At Riyadh Air, our goal is to deliver an exceptional passenger experience powered by reliability and innovation. This long-term partnership with EPCOR ensures our fleet receives the highest standard of technical support from one of the most respected names in APU maintenance. It also demonstrates our commitment to building enduring global relationships aligned with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030."

MRO

The latest news from maintenance, repair and overhaul providers

By Nigel Pittaway

FL Technics develops its offering

FL Technics, part of the Avia Solutions Group, has announced that it has been granted Part Continuing Airworthiness Management Organisation (CAMO) certification for Airbus A350 and ATR 42 and ATR 72 aircraft; as well as its recognition of an official partnership with Honeywell for business and general aviation, and has opened a new wheels and brakes support centre in Italy.

The CAMO award will enable FL Technics to additionally manage A350 and ATR 42/72 aircraft, bringing the total number of aircraft types it is authorised to support to 13.

FL Technics' deputy CEO for engineering, Oleksandr Kulyk, commented: "This step is consistent with our overall growth strategy. The certification is expected to support our expansion into the Asia-Pacific region, where CAMO capabilities can serve as a competitive advantage. Some of our clients have already expressed interest in these new capabilities."

FL Technics also announced that it had been appointed an official Honeywell channel partner for business and general aviation. The deal allows the MRO to deliver a wide range of Honeywell's engine and APU products, as well as ensuring its facilities are certified to install and support Honeywell systems through the framework backed by the original equipment manufacturer.

Commenting on the new agreement, Flavio Michio Osanai, VP of business and general aviation for Europe, the Middle East and India, said: "Channel partnerships like this one with FL Technics underscore our commitment to delivering high-quality service and solutions that enhance operational efficiency for our customers in the business and general aviation sectors. Our aim is to instil confidence with our customers, knowing that they receive reliable solutions in the region aligned with Honeywell's official standards and expertise."

Finally, FL Technics announced the opening of a new wheel and brake overhaul facility in Bergamo, Italy. Located at Milan/Bergamo airport, the facility will complement FL Technics' existing sites in Vilnius, Budapest and Hamburg.

Zilvinas Lapinskas, CEO of FL Technics, noted: "Our investment in Bergamo addresses the growing demand from airlines in southern and western Europe, and gets us one step closer to building the largest MRO network on the continent. With strong partnerships, a highly skilled workforce and strategic locations across the continent, this new facility will be a key hub for landing gear components, serving major airlines throughout Europe." (Photo FL Technics)

FL TECHNICS

Embraer adds Aerocardal to network

Embraer has announced that Aerocardal will join its Authorised Service Centre network for its range of business jets.

The Chilean company was established in 1991 and is based at Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport, Santiago. It will provide line maintenance services to Embraer business jets, including unscheduled maintenance, AOG support and drop-in support to customers.

Frank Stevens, vice president of MRO services at Embraer, said: "Embraer continues to quickly accelerate the strategic positioning of its Authorised Service Centre network, and we are pleased to now partner with Aerocardal in Chile. They are based in a strategic hub and have provided excellent service to their customers over past decades. We hope to have a successful partnership with Aerocardal and keep expanding Embraer's capacity, capability and MRO footprint in Latin America and worldwide." (Photo Embraer)

PHENOM 300E
BY EMBRAER

ST Engineering and SF Airlines open MRO facility

There was a joint announcement by ST Engineering's Commercial Aerospace business unit and Chinese cargo carrier SF Airlines about the opening of ST Engineering Aerospace (HuBei) Aviation Services, a new airframe MRO facility in Ezhou, Hubei.

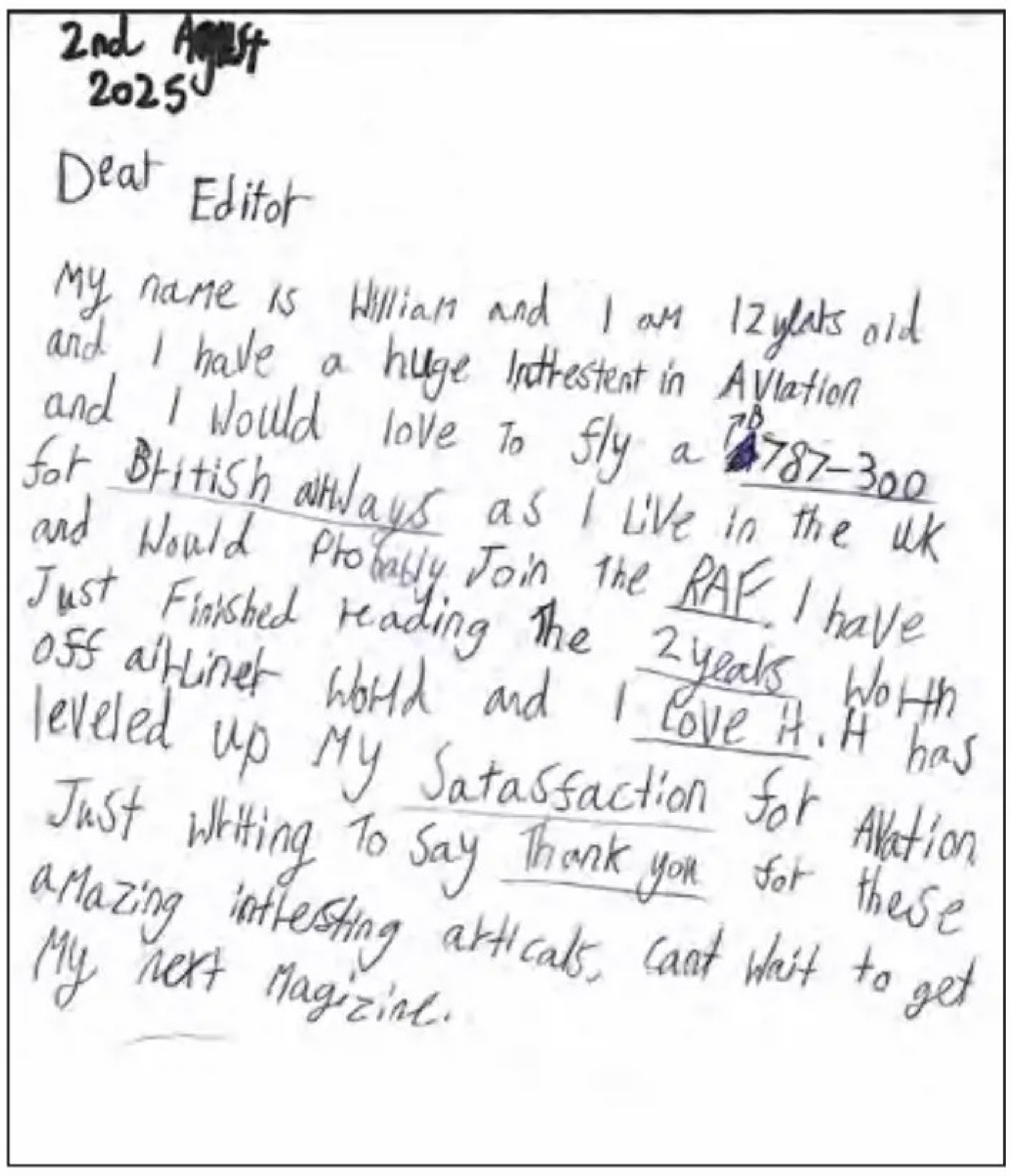
It will deliver high-quality airframe MRO services to SF Airlines, as well as third-party customers. The facility will initially comprise two hangars, with plans to expand this footprint by an additional four hangars as business grows.

The first aircraft was due to be inducted on August 12, 2025, with the second hangar expected to be completed in 2027. Once they are both operational, they will be capable of accommodating up to four widebody or eight narrowbody aircraft simultaneously.

Li Sheng, chairman of SF Airlines, said: "The global aviation market continues to recover, driving strong demand for aircraft maintenance services. As Hubei province's aviation industry cluster rapidly takes shape, the establishment of the airframe MRO facility in Ezhou presents broad development prospects. With strong support from all sectors, the new facility will fully leverage industrial chain synergies to build a competitive maintenance brand. It will consistently provide professional, efficient and reliable MRO services to customers, while contributing to the development of the local aviation industry." (Photo ST Engineering)

ST Engineering
H1
AIRLINES
SF

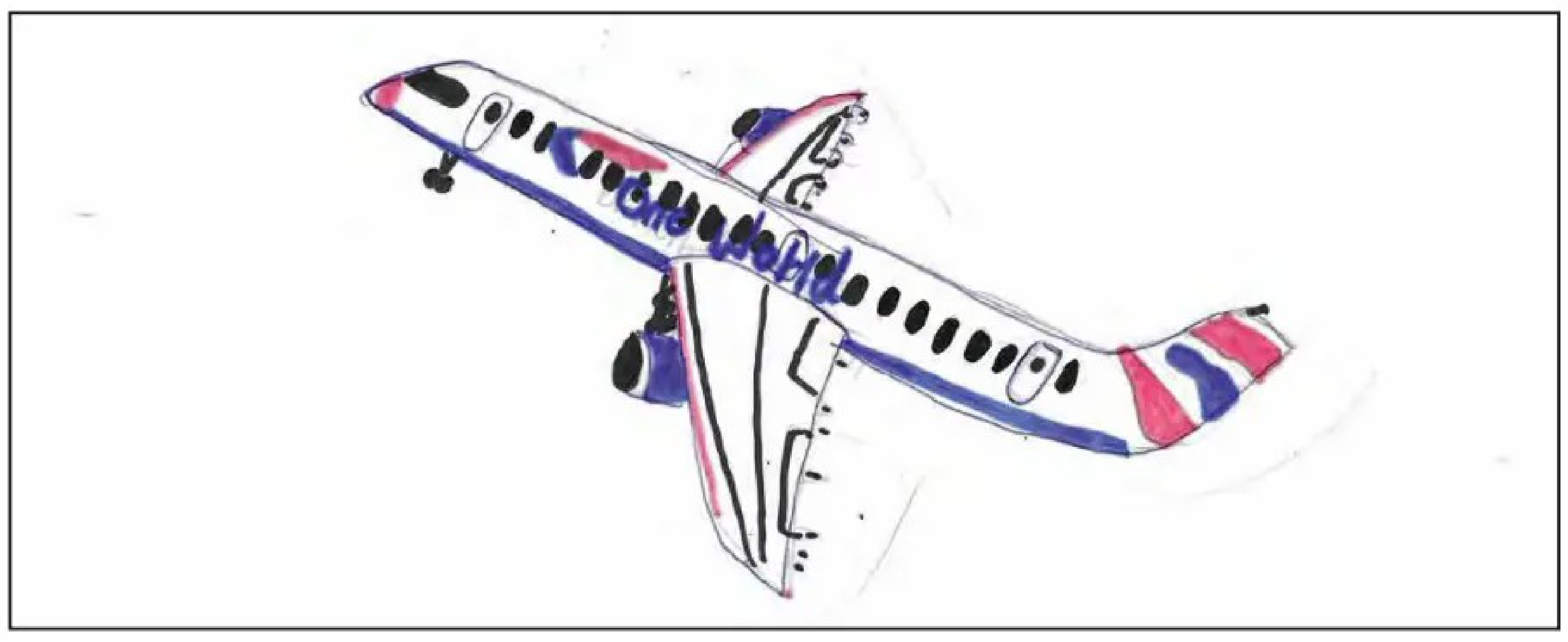
Letters to the editor

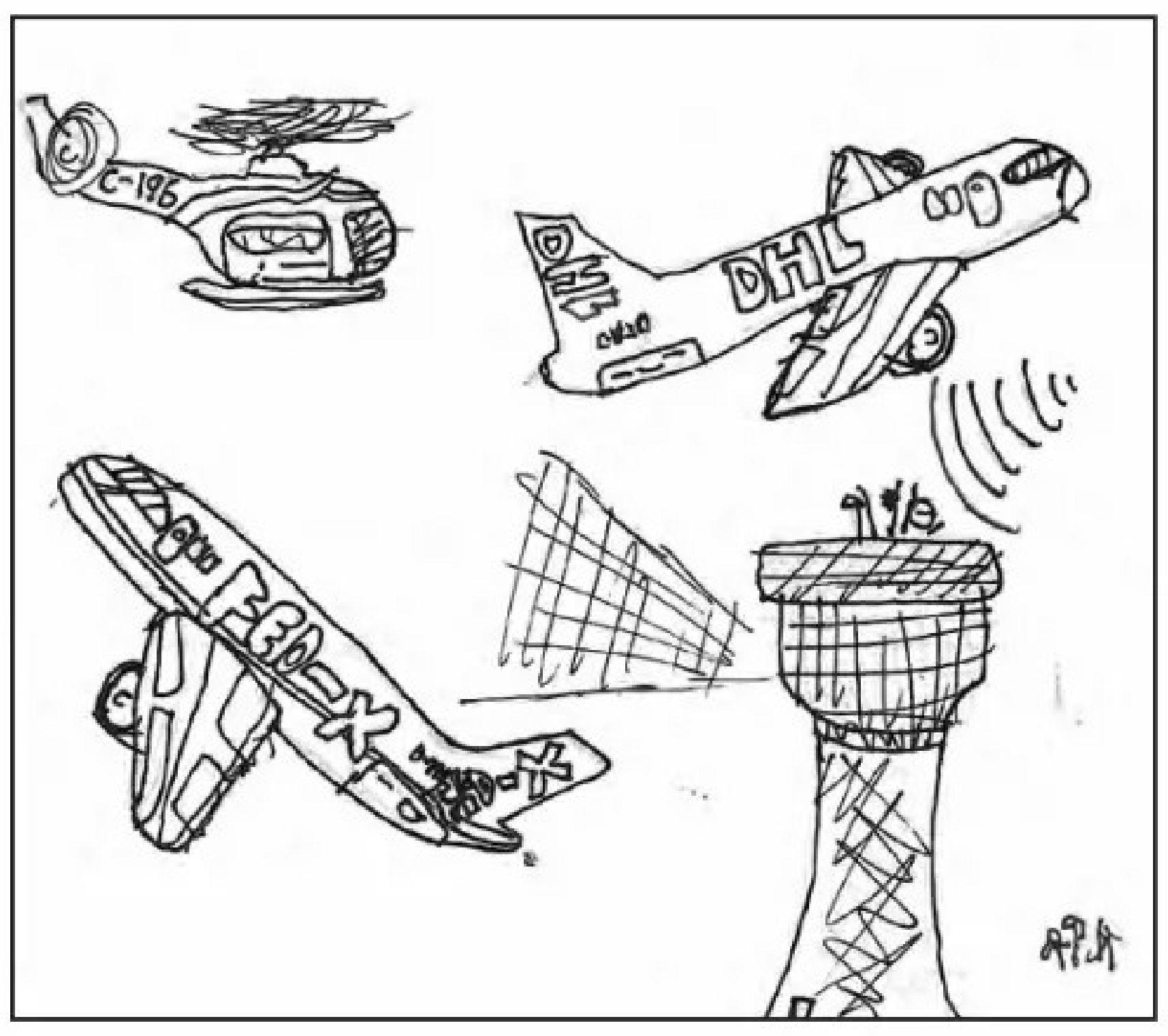


2nd August
2025

Dear Editor

My name is William and I am 12 yeats old and I have a huge inttestent in Aviation and I would love to fly a 787-300 for British airways as I live in the uk and would probably Join the RAF. I have Just Finished reading the 2 years worth off airliner world and I love it. It has leveled up my satasfaction for Aviation Just writing to say thank you for these amazing interesting articals. Cant wait to get my next magizine.




C-196
DHL
DHL

Ed: Hi William. Thanks so much for your lovely letter and your drawings. We are very excited to hear that you have caught up with two years' worth of *Airliner World* – that's a lot of reading! We hope you enjoy your future copies and make sure you follow your dream to fly that British Airways 787!

BUMPER ISSUE! 116 PAGES - 15 AIRPORTS - 8 COUNTRIES
airports of the world
From Airliner World Today's Gateways to the World
www.Key.Aero
SCHIPHOL'S STRUGGLES
Amsterdam's delicate balancing act
PLUS
CLOUD NINE IN CORSICA
A flying visit to Ajaccio
RISE LIKE A PHOENIX
Arizona hub regenerates
DON QUIJOTE'S GHOST
Madrid's lost airport
KEY WEST'S NEW ERA
Concourse A on opening day
LAND'S END - ST. MARY'S
Neighbours across the water

Dear Editor,
As a one-time subscriber to *Airports of the World*, it was great to see it back on the newsstands in the shape of the recent 2025 edition.

Robert Veitch and his colleagues are to be commended for such an informative, well-written collection of articles covering a wide range of airport types and sizes, with everything from ghost airports, Land's End/Isles of Scilly, to Dubai/Al Maktoum.

I enjoyed all the articles, but found the pieces dealing with Kansai, Ciudad Real and Amsterdam particularly interesting. Likewise, the article by Dr Nicola Davies on the psychology of airports was very enlightening.

While I appreciate that it may be unrealistic to hope that *Airports* will ever return in its previous guise, the occasional 'special', such as this recent edition, would be very welcome.

Once again, many thanks to all concerned at Key Publishing for another quality publication.
Best wishes
Graham

Ed: We're glad you enjoyed it, Graham, and for those of you who haven't picked up a copy, they are still available in our online shop, which can be accessed by scanning the QR code.

Dear Editor,
I have to compliment *Airliner World* again on a superb article piecing together Britannia Airways through to today's TUI. I previously understood parts of the story, but the 'TUI through time' chart shows the whole story, plus it is a work of art. First-class work!

The Britannia livery (old and new) was always a favourite of mine. I recall many trips down to Gatwick to photograph Britannia 737, 757, and 767s, as well as the myriad other airlines. I had the good fortune to fly 767-204, G-BNYS (c/n 24013), to the Canary Islands, a very comfortable aircraft I remember, despite the eight-abreast seating.

An idea for an article... part of my excitement driving down to Gatwick early in the morning, was the arrival of all the American airlines following deregulation in the USA. The Braniff big orange 747s, Western Airlines' DC-10s, Piedmont's 767s, and so on. So many airlines that have long since gone, wonderful times for Gatwick.

Adding to my compliments, I also enjoyed the Air Baltic article; it's definitely a resilient airline considering its take on the Pratt & Whitney GTF. Having myself had an excellent experience flying Air Baltic to Riga, the A220 is a cracking aircraft.

As always, keep up the good work.
Kind regards
Derek

Ed: Hi Derek, we're so glad you enjoyed the TUI article. Putting together the TUI through time chart was quite the task, but we thought it turned out great. Glad you did too. Great memories of Gatwick as well. It was quite a spotters' paradise back in the day, with rare and unusual aircraft and liveries coming from far and wide. Maybe a photospread is in order!

Bose A30 headset review

As the Flight Test Editor for *Airliner World's* sister publication *Pilot*, I get to fly a wide variety of aircraft, some of which are very loud! Needless to say, your hearing is something well worth protecting, and that requires a high-quality headset. Struggling to hear what is said on the radio or missing a vital call can constitute a flight safety hazard but also add a 'frustration factor' which can cause a pilot to make errors or miss threats. Wearing a quality headset is not only important; it can play a vital role in flight safety.

At only 404g on-head weight and with very low clamping force, I find the A30 very comfortable. At the same time, the noise attenuation (available in three user-selectable modes) is excellent, and the clarity of received transmissions is outstanding.

The A30 has multiple built-in equalisation (EQ) circuits. The primary ICS/radio communications path is designed to meet the latest TSO standard and to optimise voice intelligibility. An additional active EQ helps optimise the experience through the secondary (Bluetooth) audio path for wireless audio sources.

The microphone is of the noise-cancelling electret type and is typical for aviation use. It is optimised to reject far-field noise and improve performance when used with a 'hot mic' system. A 5-ohm and a 150-ohm dynamic microphone are available in a specific configuration.

It will operate satisfactorily for at least 45 hours from two AA alkaline batteries in a typical aircraft noise environment, although rechargeable batteries seem to last considerably less time. Even with continuous operation of the Bluetooth function, Bose claims alkaline battery life to be at least 25+ hours. The headset has a battery life indicator light, which signals when batteries need to be replaced.

One thing I would emphasise is that careful study of the handbook is a must. For example, the headset has three distinct settings – 'HIGH', which provides maximum noise reduction across the entire spectrum and offers the best signal-to-noise ratio for radio and intercom communications in noisy aircraft environments. The 'MED' setting provides consistent noise reduction across a wide range of frequencies and is best for clear and comfortable noise cancellation in most jet aircraft. At the same time, 'LOW' is optimised for improved interpersonal communication outside of the intercom in quieter environments.

BOSE

Inside the control module battery compartment can be found the operation switch functions, which control many of the A30's advanced features, including 'REVERSIONARY OFF' which disables all non-critical functions, including Bluetooth audio, AUX audio, and Tap Control, 'Priority' which establishes precedence between two secondary audio sources connected at the same time, and AUTO OFF/ON which allows the user to set the headset to shut down after three to 45 minutes of inactivity automatically.

To conclude, I got my first pair of Bose noise-cancelling headphones about 15 years ago, and I honestly can't conceive of ever going back to flying without active noise reduction.

The science

The two main types of noise cancellation are passive, where the earcups create a physical barrier to noise, and active, which uses an electronic signal to counteract noise elements. It is important to understand that several studies have demonstrated a clear correlation between noise and human fatigue. Therefore, a high NRR (noise reduction rating) is clearly desirable, particularly with a passive headset. The Sound Pressure Level (SPL) of noise is measured in decibels. Protracted exposure to noise levels exceeding 85dB can be tiring; exposure to noise levels above 100dB can be detrimental. In fact, exposure time is a significant factor. For example, hours of exposure at 85dB can be more harmful than a few seconds at 100dB. An active headset will typically offer between 12 and 21dB of NRR above a passive type. Unlike the very light headsets worn when ambient noise conditions are low, communication headsets used in high noise conditions are typically of the circumaural type. These headsets passively attenuate noise by simply isolating the ears from the noise. By enclosing each ear with a rigid cup, fitted with a cushion, which seals the cup to the side of the head, hearing protection is provided by the rigid wall of the cup between the ear and the noise. Unfortunately, although a good passive headset can reduce a lot of noise, the low-frequency stuff still gets through. This is doubly unfortunate for aviators, as most aircraft produce an appreciable amount of noise at the lower end of the frequency spectrum, which is why I prefer active.

Dave Unwin

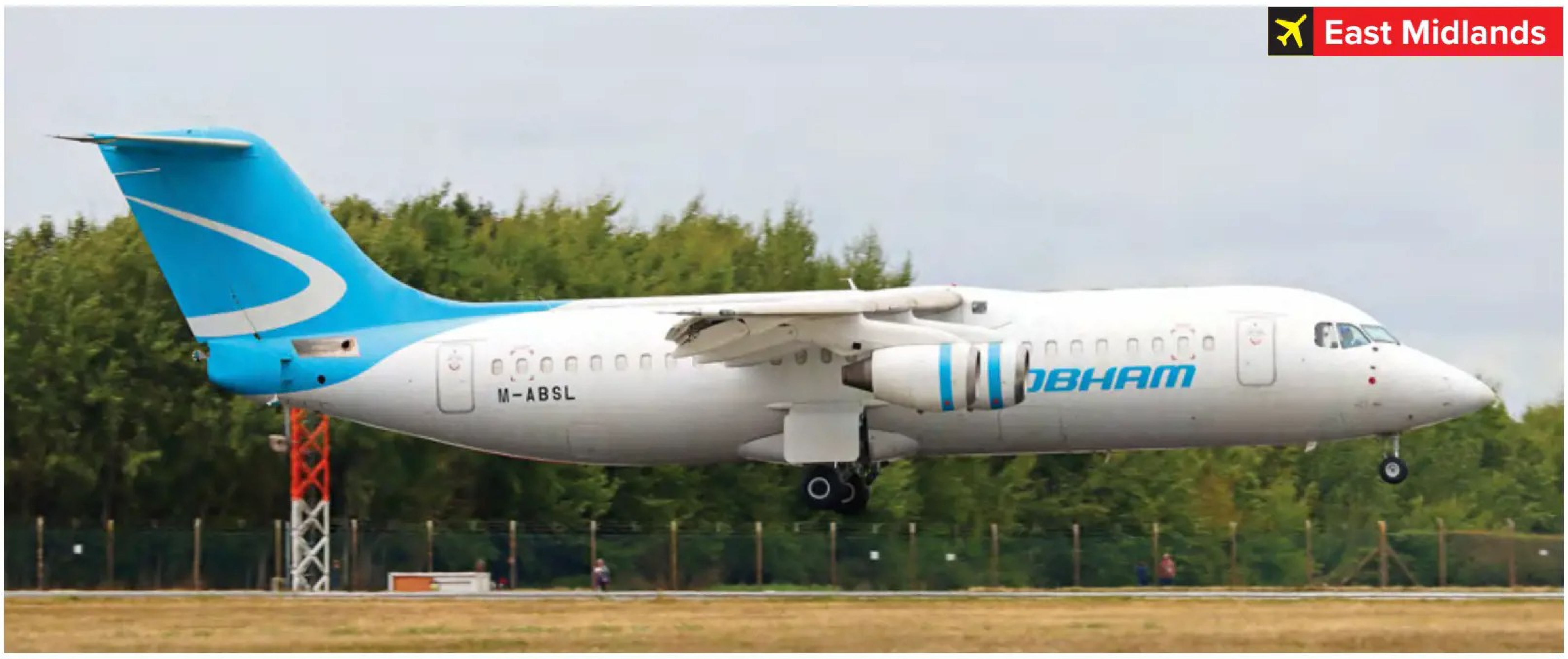
DAVE UNWIN

GET IN TOUCH WITH AIRLINER WORLD

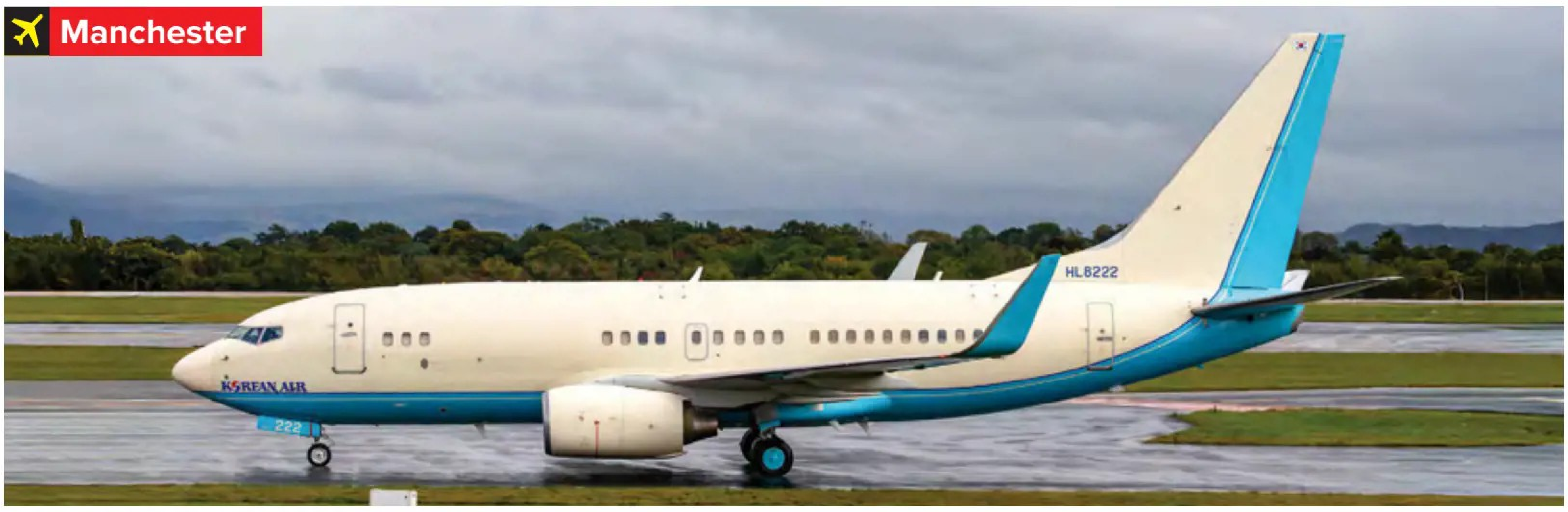
Do you have a historical tale, burning question, or comment about the magazine to share with our global audience? Get in touch via airlinerworld@keypublishing.com with the subject 'Letters to the Editor', or drop us a message on Facebook.com/AirlinerWorld, on Twitter @_AirlinerWorld or join the debate on our Key.Aero forum. As we return to the editorial office, we are also able to welcome letters once again – the postal address is: ***Airliner World*****, PO Box 100, Stamford, Lincolnshire, PE9 1XQ**

UK *Visitors*

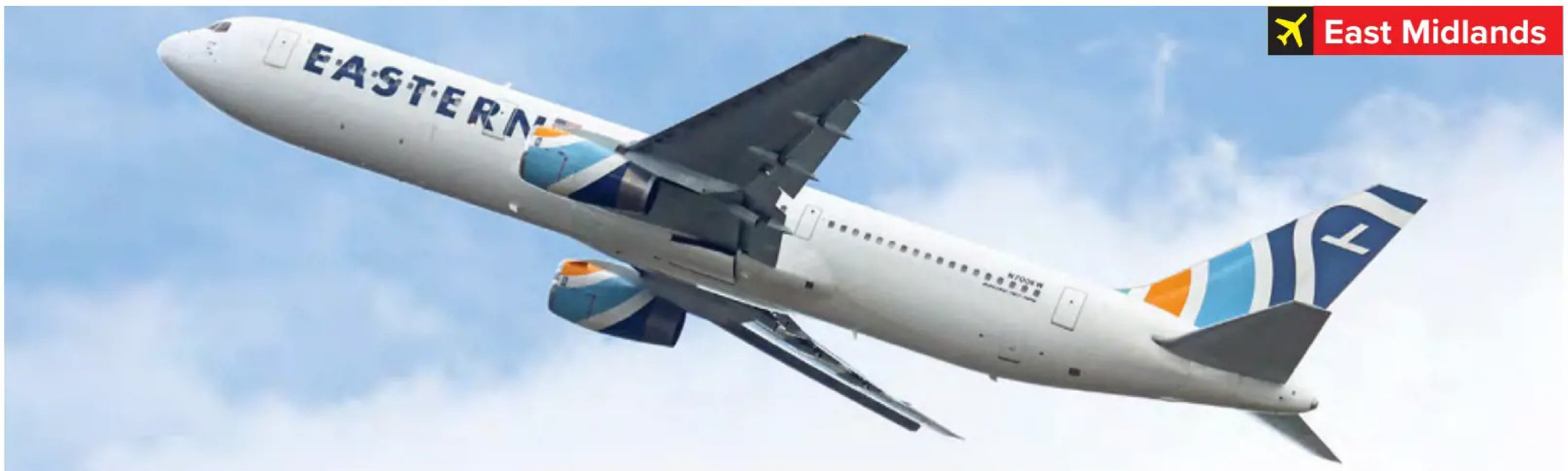
We present a selection of images of visiting aircraft from airports around the UK. For the most part, they're commercial jets, but almost all of them are unusual types, wearing new or unique liveries, or first visits by an airline or airliner to a particular airport. If you see something out of the ordinary while on your travels, please send in your pictures. Photos can be emailed to **airlinerworld@keypublishing.com** Please ensure you provide full details with the images, particularly the date, location, airline name and aircraft identity



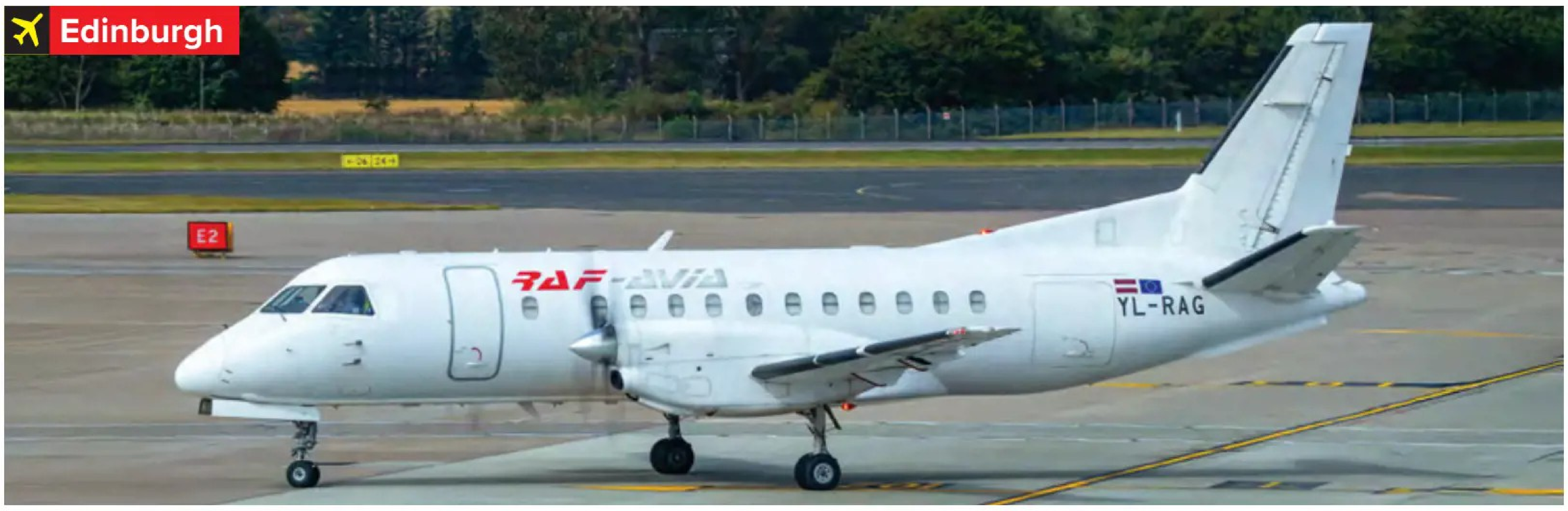
Once a frequent visitor to UK and European airports, this Isle of Man-registered Avro RJ100, M-ABSL (c/n E3384), started life with British Airways subsidiary BA CityFlyer Express in June 2001. It was later taken up by SWISS in 2006, before heading down under in 2018 and flying for various Australian carriers, including Cobham Aviation. The quadjet underwent work at Airbourne Colours, removing its former livery for an all-white scheme, before it returned to Cranfield for further maintenance
JOHN GREGORY



This Boeing 737-7B5 BBJ, HL8222 (c/n 37660), belonging to Korean Air was spotted at Manchester after positioning from London/Luton on September 14. The 16-year-old CFM56-7B27-powered jet was originally delivered to the Bank of Utah in September 2009, before being taken up by Korean Air in July 2010
MARTYN CARTLEDGE

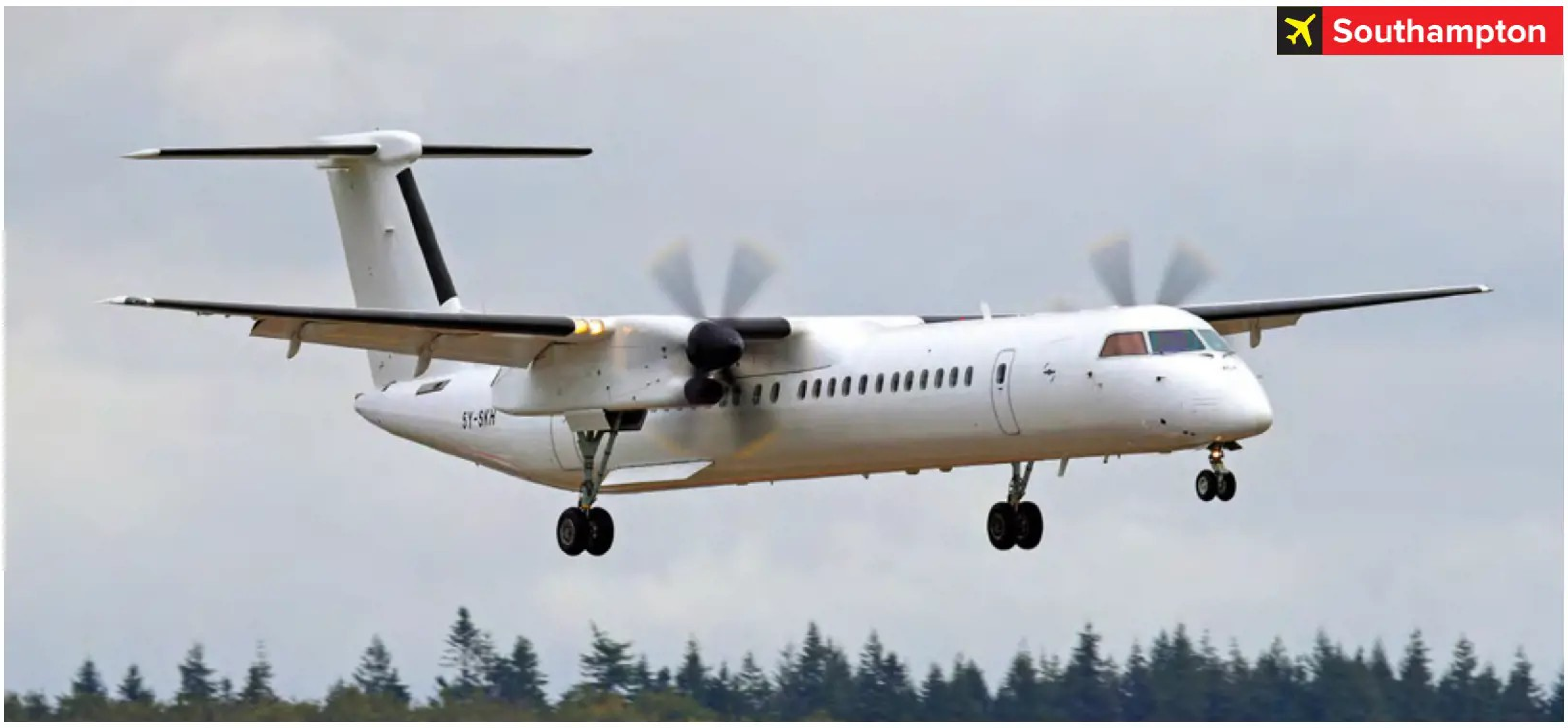


Eastern Airlines Boeing 767-336ER, N700KW (c/n 25443), arrived at East Midlands on September 4 from Saguenay, Quebec. It is seen here departing for Riga the next day. The Rolls-Royce RB211-powered example formed part of the British Airways fleet from March 1992 and was later operated by Qantas for 14 years
JOHN GREGORY



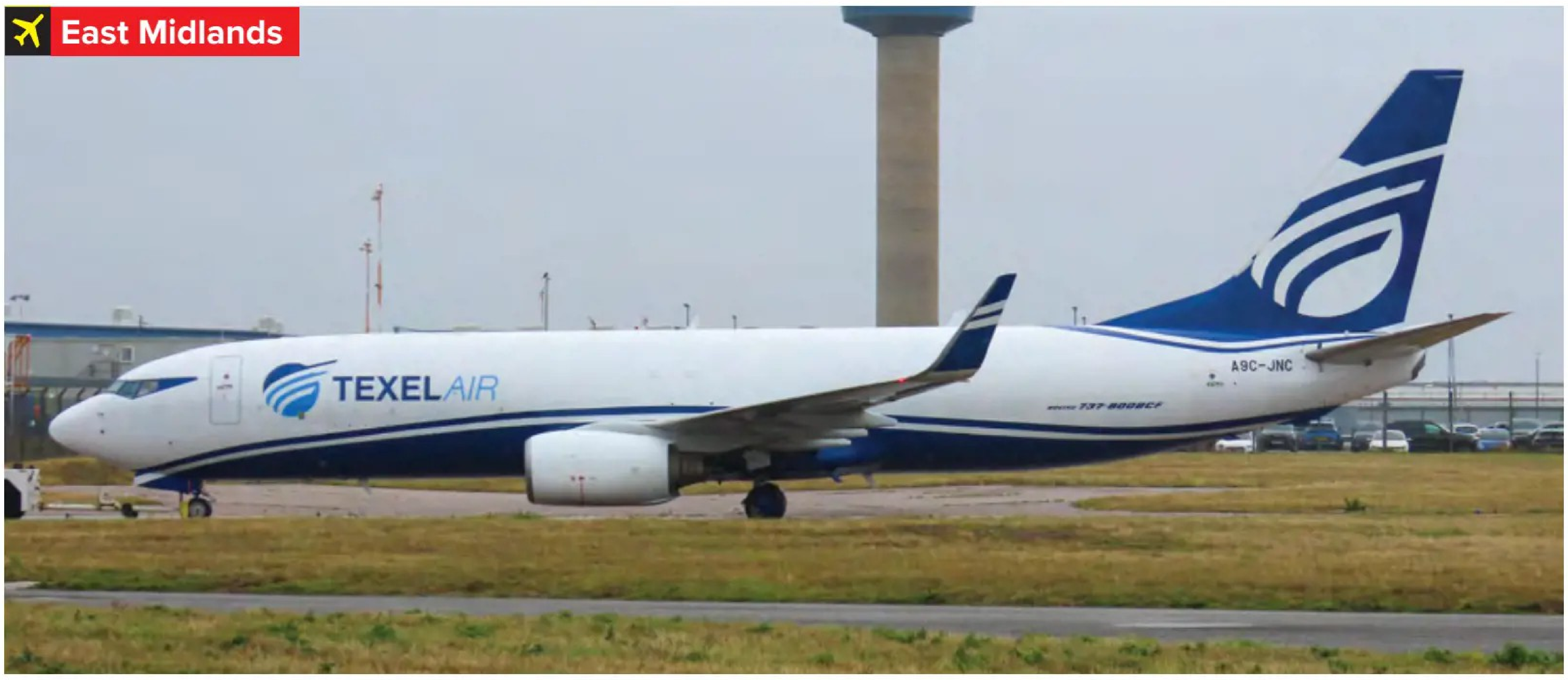
Saab 340AF, YL-RAG (c/n 340A-052), of Latvian company RAF-Avia was photographed at Edinburgh Airport on September 9. The aircraft was operating a cargo charter from Toulouse in France. After a short stop in Scotland, it flitted over the border to Liverpool John Lennon Airport
B-1 IMAGES

Southampton



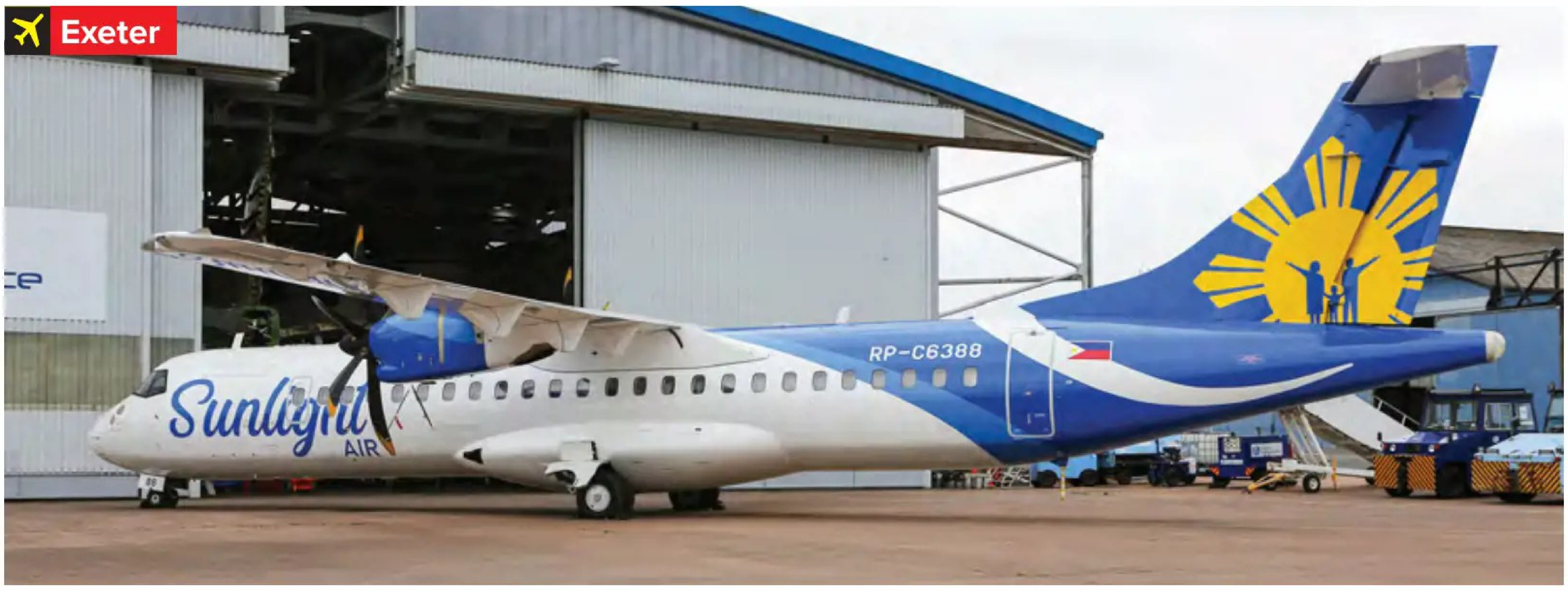
Captured arriving at Southampton on August 30, this Bombardier Dash 8 Q400, 5Y-SKH (c/n 4046), belongs to Kenyan carrier Skyward Airlines. The aircraft was on its delivery flight from Calgary to Nairobi/Wilson. After leaving Southampton, it routed via Ioannina, Hurghada and Addis Ababa AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/ RICHARD HUNT

East Midlands



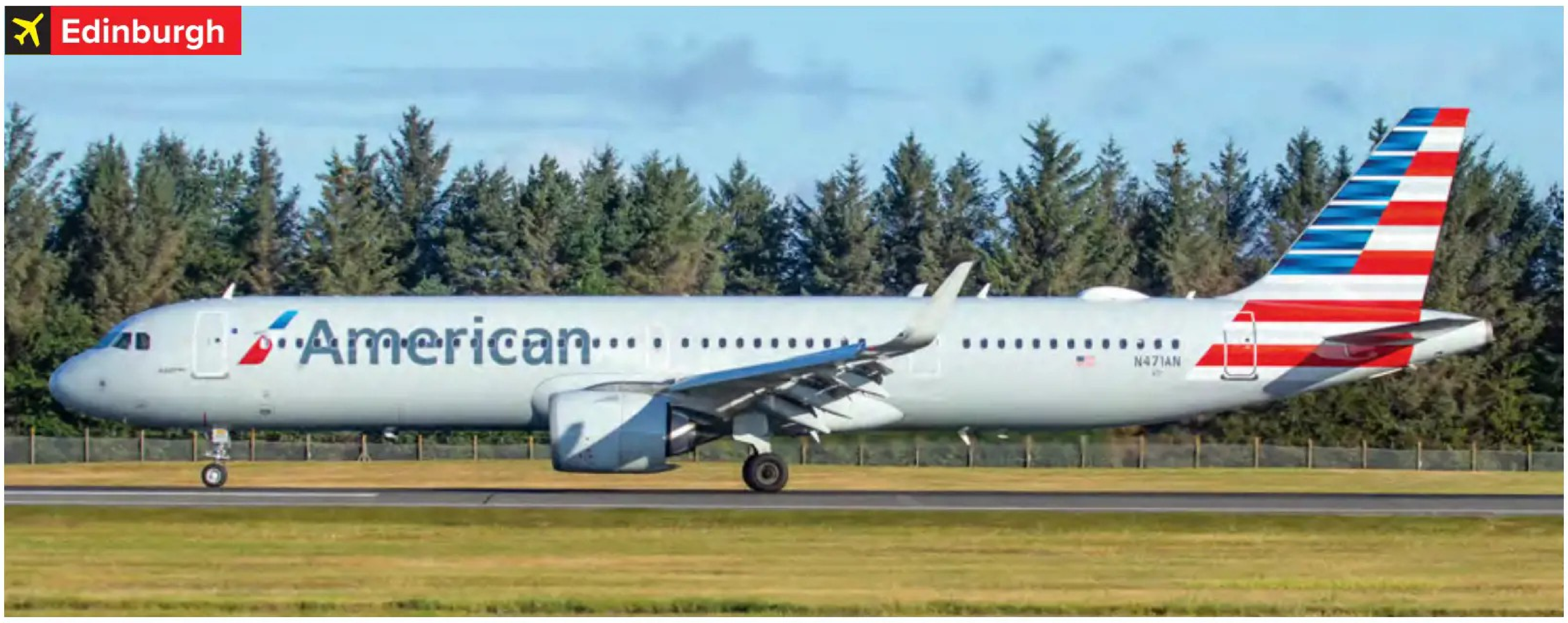
Texel Air Boeing 737-8Q8BCF, A9C-JNC (c/n 30672), is shown departing East Midlands Airport after being painted at Airbourne Colours. The 21-year-old freighter arrived the week before from Bahrain, wearing full DHL colours, but has now been repainted into Texel's own livery. The aircraft was first delivered in passenger configuration to Malev in May 2004 and also served with S7, before freighter conversion and delivery to Texel in 2022 MATTHEW COCKRELL

Exeter



This 11-year-old ATR 72-600, RP-C6388 (c/n 1116), belongs to Filipino carrier Sunlight Air. The aircraft initially arrived at the Devon facility wearing the livery of its former operator, VoePass Linhas Aereas, registered PS-VPE. It was then registered to Jetstream Aviation Capital as N1116J, before being acquired by its new owners, joining a trio of ATR 72-500s IAN SIMPSON

Edinburgh



Ahead of the airline placing its soon-to-arrive Airbus A321XLRs on transatlantic services, American Airlines has been sending one of its A321neos from Philadelphia to Edinburgh for crew training. This particular A321neo, N471AN (c/n 12262), was delivered to the airline in November 2024. It was pictured at the Scottish capital on September 5. After receiving a new crew and topping up the fuel tanks, it returned to Philadelphia B-1 IMAGES

The latest training aids available for the aviation professional

Emirates opens new pilot training facility

Emirates has opened its new state-of-the-art crew training centre in Dubai, for its Airbus A350 and forthcoming Boeing 777X fleets. The airline said that the 63,318 sq ft facility houses six full-flight simulator bays. Currently, two A350 full-flight simulators have been installed. Four more, including those for the 777X, will arrive in the next couple of years. Emirates said that each simulator has the capacity to deliver 7,500 hours of training for up to 1,000 pilots annually. The new facility also has four large classrooms for facilitating courses in pilot recurrent, conversion and command training.

Once the new facility is fully operational, Emirates' pilots will have access to 17 simulators, including 11 for training on Airbus A380s and Boeing 777s. "Across all its facilities, Emirates' capacity will expand by 54%, offering 130,000 training hours to its pilot community every year," according to the airline.

The airline's chairman and CEO, Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, said: "Our new Emirates Crew Training Centre is a game-changer and has a significant role to play both in the industry's ecosystem and Dubai's emergence as a global aviation hub. Every dirham of our AED 500 million investment is already delivering value. The centre sets new firsts and serves as the best-in-class in aviation training, shaping our programmes and preparation for our future fleet. Above all, our pilots and instructors have shared stellar feedback on the new facility, which is immensely rewarding." (Photo Emirates)

UK government seeks aviation ambassadors

The UK's Department for Transport (DfT) is on the hunt for a fresh batch of aviation ambassadors to inspire the next generation of talent in a bid to futureproof the sector. The scheme encourages people from diverse backgrounds to pursue a career in aviation, boosting access to opportunity as part of the government's Plan for Change.

The aviation ambassadors come from all backgrounds within the industry, including pilots, engineers and ground staff – one of the current ambassadors is easyJet first officer Hannah Wells (see page 68). They deliver a range of outreach activities, including giving talks in colleges, supporting industry events and promoting aviation careers through online platforms and traditional media.

The DfT stated that engagement with the current team has enabled thousands of people who may never have considered working in aviation to become more aware of the career paths available to them within the industry.

Calgary chosen for CAE/WestJet training

Alberta Training
Centre of Excellence

WestJet and CAE have signed a 15-year agreement whereby the Canadian carrier will become the primary commercial airline customer for the training firm's new cutting-edge facility in Calgary, Alberta.

The 126,000sq ft, Alberta Training Centre of Excellence for Aviation and Aerospace is slated to open in 2028. WestJet will be the first airline to schedule initial and recurrent training for its pilots and cabin crews on the Boeing 737 MAX, 737 Next Generation (NG), 787 Dreamliner and De Havilland Dash 8-400. CAE said that, in partnership with Mount Royal University, "the facility will be the first of its kind in Canada to combine state-of-the-art training equipment with collaborative research and development initiatives."

Once operational, the new centre will boast eight full-flight simulators alongside cabin trainers and digital learning tools. It will have the ability to train around 6,000 industry professionals annually, split between pilots and cabin crew members.

The airline's CEO, Alexis von Hoensbroech, said that the partnership with CAE was part of its commitment to its Calgary hub, as well as its "current and future WestJetters."

Matthew Bromberg, CAE's president and CEO, added: "As global demand for aviation professionals accelerates, the new facility positions Canada at the forefront of training excellence. I am grateful to our partners for their trust and collaboration in shaping the future of aviation." (Photo CAE)

Integrated degree and ATPL programme launched

Airways Aviation has announced an innovative programme that combines a Bachelor's Degree in Air Transport Management with an Airline Transport Pilot Licence (ATPL), in partnership with Atlântica – Instituto Universitário.

According to the organisation, the integrated programme "responds to the current needs of the aviation sector, allowing students from around the world to gain management skills and their professional pilot qualification at the same time."

Students enrolled in the course will begin with the theoretical component of the ATPL, which will be credited towards the degree. This will then be followed by training in the fields of management, economics, marketing and aviation regulation. Throughout the programme, students will develop both technical and strategic skills, preparing them for cockpit and leadership roles in the aviation sector.

Airways Aviation is one of the biggest aviation and pilot training groups in the world. It has academies located across Europe, the Middle East, Asia/Australia, India and Africa and boasts a training fleet of more than 100 aircraft. Located in Oeiras in the Lisbon region of Portugal, Atlântica – Instituto Universitário is a private higher education institution offering a range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses in fields including engineering, health sciences, management and technology.

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DELTA AIR LINES
MATT FALCUS

We look forward to hearing from you!

Parallel problems in Delhi

ABOVE: ***Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, ET-ATL (c/n 34505), was delivered on June 29, 2016***
AIRTEAMIMAGES.COM/WOCO

An Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 787-8 and Vistara Airbus A320neo came within just 400ft vertically and 0.2nm horizontally of each other during a loss of separation incident at Delhi/Indira Gandhi, a report by India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) has found.

The incident occurred on November 10, 2023, as the A320, VT-TQL (c/n 10748), approached runway 29L, and the Dreamliner, ET-ATL (c/n 34505), prepared to depart from the parallel runway 29R.

At the time of the incident, a three-runway westerly mode of operations was in place which saw runway 29L and 29R being used for arrivals and departures, respectively, while runway 27 was being utilised for both. The report said that, to ensure safe operations, a separation of no less than 90 seconds – dubbed Time-To-Touchdown (TTT) – was allowed between departing aircraft from 29R and the following arrival on runway 29L.

As the Vistara aircraft was cleared to land on 29L, the Ethiopian 787 was instructed to line up on runway 29R. When the latter was subsequently cleared for take-off, the former's TTT had reduced to 108 seconds. By the time the 787 had started its roll, the arriving A320 had fallen below the 90-second threshold, but the controller for 29R failed to respond, the report said.

Due to an unstable approach caused by weather, the A320 crew initiated a go-around shortly after the 787 lifted off runway 29R. The missed approach procedure and departure routing converged, which created a conflict situation and the first of two traffic collision avoidance system resolution advisory (TCAS RA) alerts when horizontal separation reduced to 0.6nm and vertical separation to 300ft.

After "panicking upon realising the conflict", the controller responsible for approach/departure control (APAD) attempted to confirm the Vistara A320's altitude through the tower controller responsible for runway 29L (ADC-S1) instead of resolving the conflict directly with the Ethiopian Dreamliner, which was already in contact with him. The controller then instructed the 787 to stop climbing at 2,600ft and turn right to a heading of 270. The report said these instructions worsened the situation, and had the Dreamliner continued its climb to 4,000ft as part the original departure clearance, the proximity between the aircraft "might not have been reduced significantly."

The separation between the aircraft subsequently decreased to 0.2nm horizontally and 400ft vertically, with both aircraft executing second TCAS RA advisories. The report said that if the 787 had avoided the ATC-instructed right turn it could have prevented the second TCAS RA, as the Dreamliner had already crossed the A320's path and was on a diverging track.

The loss of separation incident ended after both aircraft successfully executed their second TCAS RA advisories. The Ethiopian 787 continued onto its destination, Addis Ababa, while the Vistara aircraft made an uneventful landing after a second approach.

The AAIB report said the that the incident was caused due to a loss of situational awareness of the tower controller responsible for runway 29R (ADC-S2), wherein an aircraft was allowed to take off from runway 29R even though the arriving aircraft's TTT had already breached the minimum set value of 90 seconds while approaching dependent parallel runway 29L.

The report added: "Subsequently, the arriving aircraft, due to an unstabilised approach on finals, initiated a go-around from runway 29L and simultaneously the other aircraft got airborne from the parallel runway 29R which consequently led to intersection of their projected flight paths."

Contributory factors included the "complex and high-stress environment" created by the operational interdependency of each runway at the airport and ADC-S2 (responsible for 29R) controller's dependency, while issuing take-off clearance to aircraft under their jurisdiction, on the position of arriving aircraft on runway 29L and concurrent operations on runway 27 under adverse weather conditions.

Additionally, because the ADC-S2 controller was required to manage multiple simultaneous safety-critical tasks at a very busy airport resulted in cognitive overload. This impaired the controller's ability to effectively prioritise actions and respond to critical situations in a timely manner.

Another contributing factor, according to the AAIB, was the ADC-S1 controller's delayed transfer of communication to the approach/departure controller regarding execution of the A320's missed approach, which "impeded efficient conflict resolution and limited the controller's ability to manage the situation effectively."

The departure controller's "inappropriate resolution instructions" to the 787 "potentially resulted in less separation between both aircraft and escalated the risk of airprox." Finally, the design of the standard instrument departure routing the 787 was cleared for "did not adequately ensure positive separation" between departing aircraft from runway 29R and aircraft executing a missed approach from runway 29L, "increasing the risk of loss of separation".

The investigation issued a total of 20 safety recommendations to the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Key proposals for AAI include redesigning SIDs and missed approach procedures to ensure positive separation, introducing automatic communication transfers between controllers and strengthening teamwork through training. Enhanced use of aviation English in intercom co-ordination, background communication recording and automated weather briefings for controllers were also advised. Further measures covered stricter adherence to standard operating procedures, refresher and simulator training, improved windshear reporting and preservation of ATIS and flight strip data. Stress management protocols, including timely relief and counselling for controllers after critical incidents, were recommended, alongside ensuring all safety-critical positions are manned. AAI was also urged to develop system alerts for minimum separation breaches. Separately, the IMD was advised to implement windshear warning systems at all major airports to enhance flight safety during take-off and landing. AW

LEFT: ***The Vistara A320neo conducted a go-around after becoming destablised owing to weather conditions at the time of the approach***
AIRBUS/MASTER FILMS

DATE	REG'N	C/N	TYPE	OPERATOR	FATALITIES	LOCATION	NOTES
August 16	OH-ATE	741	ATR 72-212A	NORRA	0	Finland	Right propeller struck GPU when aircraft rolled forward after engine start because pilots forgot to set parking brake, preliminary report said
August 20	F-HBNJ	4908	Airbus A320-214	Air France	0	France	Aircraft encountered turbulence descending towards Ajaccio. Two passengers and three crew members were injured
August 23	N805WA	53470	McDonnell Douglas MD-83	World Atlantic Airlines	0	USA	Aircraft was descending towards Miami when it encountered turbulence, seriously injuring one cabin crew member
August 25	PK-PPI	208B5267	Cessna 208B Grand Caravan EX	Amole Air	0	Indonesia	Overran runway 25 after landing at Ilaga/Aminggaru
August 28	N110SY	17000405	Embraer E175LR	SkyWest Airlines	0	USA	Encountered turbulence while cruising over Weatherford, Texas. Diverted to Austin. At least one injury was reported
August 28	N373NW	1641	Airbus A320-212	Delta Air Lines	0	USA	TCAS manoeuvre during approach to Washington/Ronald Reagan National caused serious injuries to one cabin crew member
September 7	C-GWSR	35288	Boeing 737-8CT	WestJet	0	Saint Martin	Suffered right main landing gear collapse during landing at Saint Martin/Princess Juliana
September 12	N919WN	36625	Boeing 737-7H4	Southwest Airlines	0	USA	Encountered turbulence during descent to Orlando International, seriously injuring one cabin crew member

Becoming the Middle East's BIG deal

Saudi Arabian budget carrier flyadeal is developing rapidly both in size and reach. The airline's CEO, **Steven Greenway**, discussed the strategy with **Bernie Baldwin**

flyadeal
طيران أديل
الفرس
BN
neo

"The only constant in life is change!" That proclamation may hark back to the philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus, but it could well be the current mission statement of Saudi Arabian low-fare airline flyadeal. Just as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is undergoing considerable changes, so too is flyadeal as it gears up for the biggest transformation period since it began operations in 2017.

Leading the change is CEO Steven Greenway, who took over the role at the beginning of 2024.

Front and centre among his initiatives is the development of the airline's fleet. This currently stands at 11 Airbus A320-200s and 29 A320neos. This year, the airline also leased a handful of widebodies, namely four A330-200s, a single A330-300 and a Boeing 777-300. "They're on wet lease… for the Hajj period and also Umrah. We do a lot of long-haul flying. It's not mainline or scheduled, it's more charters," Greenway explained.

Joining the fleet will be 51 A320neo family aircraft – 39 A321neos and 12 A320neos. "They're not A321LRs or XLRs, but we have the option to change," he stated. "At the moment though, we're happy with the A321neo baseline because, for what we need, the aircraft has enough range to get us up to Europe and also to over to India."

Additionally, an order for ten A330-900s was announced in April 2025 to build the long-haul fleet. With the 11 A320ceos heading for retirement from 2026 – a little after the first of the 39 A321neos arrives – the plan is to go from 40 aircraft currently to 98 by 2029.

"The A330-900s, which are the same size as the old -300, can have up to 460 seats. We're probably going to be in the range of 420-440 because we'll have a premium cabin. That's chewing up a couple of rows of seats," Greenway said. »

BELOW: ***Airbus A320neo, HZ-FBN (c/n 12544), was delivered to flyadeal on July 16, 2025***
ALL IMAGES FLYADEAL UNLESS STATED

LEFT: ***Steven Greenway was appointed chief executive officer of flyadeal in January last year***

BELOW: ***Saudia Group disclosed an order for ten Airbus A330-900s in April 2025 which will be assigned to flyadeal upon delivery*** AIRBUS

Personnel challenges

Fleet growth from 40 aircraft to 98 in four years means attracting more personnel and training them. Flyadeal being part of the Saudia Group helps greatly when it comes to training facilities.

Greenway explained: "Prince Sultan Academy, one of the nine companies in the Saudia Group, does training for flynas, Riyadh Air, ourselves and, of course, Saudia itself. They have world-class facilities – evacuation training, water training, fixed-based and non-fixed-based simulators and so on. We use a lot of their facilities for the hardware type of training, which makes perfect sense. In fact, we now have two A320 simulators dedicated to us because we're such a big user."

Sourcing personnel is less of a challenge than in other parts of the world. However, while the Kingdom pushes for a highly educated workforce across the population, there are an awful lot of alternative competitive industries for potential careers.

"We're in a very good position. At head office, the vast majority of the functions are done by Saudi nationals. We have only a few expats working there," Greenway reported. "At crew level, it's a bit different. With cabin crew, it's an interesting dynamic. There are targets in terms of 'Saudi-isation' for cabin crew, but it is a bit challenging, because as people become more educated and the economy develops, many don't want to be flight attendants. We do have quite a mix there in terms of a dependency on foreign labour.

"When it comes to pilots, I often get asked whether there's a shortage, but actually not for us," the CEO confirmed. "Again, the government is investing heavily in graduates going to flight school overseas and coming back with a commercial licence. We also work with the government on type ratings. There's a new scholarship programme with the government that sees 150 in the first tranche, 150 people who have

Saudia Group
AIRBUS
Saleh Eid
Vice President Fleet Management and Agreements
SAUDIA GROUP
Benoît de Saint-Exupéry

A330
AIRBUS

ABOVE: ***Greenway said the airline would likely configure the incoming widebodies with between 420 and 440 seats***
AIRBUS/S RAMADIER

a commercial pilot licence who will then get type rated in Spain for three months then come back to us as first officers.

"One hundred percent of our first officers are now Saudi; no foreigners. We'll start to see our dependency on foreign captains being reduced over the next few years as Saudi first officers upgrade to captains," he added. "We'll still have some foreigners as captains; you don't want to get rid of your experienced captains, but the proportion of them will drop."

Cabin considerations

With new aircraft and additional crew on the way, the onboard product has to be considered, especially now flyadeal will have its own widebodies.

"We'll have new seats for the A320/A321neos, plus new extra-large overhead bins. I know it sounds simplistic, but the bins dramatically change the efficiency in terms of loading an aircraft, because everyone's got space for their bags now," Greenway noted. "With the seats, they're the Geven Essenza and they're fixed and not reclinable. We'll also have in-seat power, but everything else is pretty much stock standard.

"I think the next change will be inflight connectivity. We haven't yet decided what the approach will be. There are multiple options on the table now, which is great," he continued. "We're looking at it not only for the customer but also connectivity for the crew, for retailing, and many other activities that we could potentially undertake with the aircraft being connected. We hope to make a decision by year-end."

In-flight entertainment (IFE) will also be introduced through connectivity, not via embedded systems – even on the A330neos. Greenway said: When I started Scoot, we had ex-Singapore Airlines 777s with early generation IFE and we debated if we'd keep it or not, as it was two tons of equipment. Anyway, we ripped it all out. I got – and I'm not exaggerating – zero complaints.

"Here was our long-haul aircraft flying eight or nine hours during a time when the smartphone and tablet were not as ubiquitous and yet people were still fine as long as they had in-seat power and had content pre-loaded on their device."

Greenway has been impressed by connectivity systems which enable passengers to stream just as they might normally on the ground. "For example, the system installed on Qatar Airways is magnificent. It's like being at home. For someone like me, on an eight-hour flight, I'm so productive because it's as if I've never left the ground. As long as the connectivity is reliable and fast, that should be all you need," he declared.

The airline also intends to utilise connectivity to aid the crew in their »

BELOW: ***The fleet currently stands at 11 Airbus A320-200s, and 29 A320neos***

flyadeal طيران أديل
D-AXAC

طيران أديل flyadeal
HZ-FAA

ABOVE: ***Airbus A320-214, HZ-FAA (c/n 7829), was the first aircraft delivered to flyadeal. It arrived brand-new from the manufacturer on August 23, 2017, and the entered service when the airline began operations on September 23***

work and make onboard sales more secure. "We don't have a secure payment link at the moment – very few airlines do. Having one enables orders in the cabin from personal devices to the galley and the crew can act on that, perhaps after the primary meal service," Greenway said, noting that while the front-end of connectivity services gets the bulk of the attention, the back-end element is important. "That's what actually drives a lot of the business cases."

Onboard purchases are part of the airline's ancillary revenue streams. Greenway admits that there is little change planned in this area. "We have all the basic stuff you would associate with ancillaries – from travel insurance to bags to seats and so on. More products will come online, such as hotels, cars and holidays, all by the end of the year," he said.

"The reality is that 80% of ancillary revenue comes from bags and seats. It's the non-sexy stuff that really drives that, effectively turning bags and seats into a revenue-managed commodity. It's actually dynamic pricing now rather than a static pricing regime."

That dynamic pricing, as with ticketing, will be handled by the sales and distribution channels. At flyadeal, the IT system employed is Navitaire, which is used by many low-fare carriers. Greenway elaborated on how his team have adapted the system. "There are a range of things that we have developed internally, including a reaccommodation module. We look very specifically at where we want to own the IP [intellectual property] – where there is something that really delivers a differentiated experience for the customer – and reaccommodation is a really key one for us," he stated.

"In terms of sales and distribution, we're almost mirroring a full-service carrier and the main reason why is that we go into such a diversified set of markets. In the Kingdom itself, everyone is mobile phone-based, doing most of their activities through apps and so forth. It's very much a mobile and website-focused market.

"Outside the Kingdom, we have everything – country managers, general sales agents, and we'll soon have GDS [global distribution system] on Amadeus travel [platform]. We work with online travel agents and many traditional outlets. With such diversified markets, trying to sell directly is just a non-starter," he stressed. "It's like when I worked for Scoot. We had one flight a day to Japan, and it's incredibly expensive to advertise your direct channels in Japan. You just work with the four consolidators and they fill your plate – that's all you do. Give them a 2% margin and be done with it."

Route revamp

The flyadeal route network available for sale is destined to undergo some expansion as the new aircraft enter service, with the narrowbodies providing longer range, before even considering the widebodies. Greenway estimates the A320/A321neos will have up to an extra hour and a half in them. But there is a hurdle to overcome.

"We don't have ETOPS (extended-range twin-engine operations) at the moment. We will have that by the year-end. ETOPS is a regulatory regime, but also a matter of equipment. With the ongoing supply chain issues, it's been very difficult to get aircraft equipped to ETOPS standard. For example, you can't get oxygen tanks. It's a mind-numbing issue, but so be it," he sighed.

"Just getting ETOPS and not doing anything else actually provides extra range, because flights don't have to hug the coast. So, when going to

flyadeal
طيران أديل flyadeal
F-WNTZ
neo

BELOW: ***The carrier has opted for the CFM International LEAP-1A to power its A320neo Family fleet***

India, rather than keeping close to the coast, you just go straight across the Gulf."

Coming back to network changes, Greenway puts simplicity first: "We have so much in our backyard that we don't do at the moment; we don't go to Bahrain, or Doha, or Abu Dhabi, and more. We've just started to go to Baghdad, as previously the insurance companies wouldn't cover the aircraft on the ground. That's now being fixed," he said.

"Syria is now possible too – and it's huge. We have five million Syrians in Saudi Arabia. All of a sudden, the market's just opened for places like Aleppo and Damascus. Also, we

»

ABOVE: ***Saudi Arabian competitor flynas operates a slightly larger fleet compared to flyadeal with 65 A320 Family and a pair of A330-300s*** AIRBUS/A DOUMENJOU/ MASTER FILMS

RIGHT: ***Of the region's established players, Greenway would put Air Arabia as "one of the best run out there"*** AIRBUS/ JV REYMONDON

HZ-FBN (c/n 12544) was the 40th A320 Family aircraft delivered to flyadeal

40th A320 Aircraft

couldn't go to Beirut economically because we couldn't cross over Syria, but that's changed now," he added. "Initially, it's about filling in those blanks.

"Regarding the longer legs of the new aircraft, the A321neos get us to two places we're very interested in. One is India, where we can get to most of the country. Number two is Europe, particularly southeast Europe, such as Italy. That won't come as soon; probably not until 2027."

Egypt remains the carrier's biggest international market. "It's about 60 flights a week," the CEO confirmed. "Then the UAE, Dubai in particular, is booming. From Riyadh alone we have six flights a day into Dubai World Central airport. I'd like to go to Sharjah and Abu Dhabi as well. We're not serving those yet as we just don't have the aircraft."

Back home, there's the growing Jeddah-Riyadh service. "That wasn't even in the top ten of the world's busiest routes a couple of years ago, but it's now number three and will be number one in the next year or two," he pointed out. "We have 25 flights a day each way between those cities. Flynas and Saudia each have about 25, so there's about 75 to 80 flights a day between Jeddah and Riyadh alone – for a distance of 900km."

In filling the network gaps, flyadeal is making travel easier for a population having increased disposable income. Moreover, it is a young population, with 70% below the age of 40. "And a much freer population now, don't forget. There were previously many restrictions related to traditional values. It's all changed," Greenway noted. "For example, you can now see young women going for a shopping trip to Dubai unescorted, just as you might elsewhere. That could never even have been thought of ten years ago."

Another change is in visas for religious travel. "The previous Umrah visa would let a pilgrim into the country for a specific number of days, but they could never leave Jeddah and Mecca. After that, they had to leave," he noted. "People now come in on a tourist visa, so the pilgrim can do their religious duty, but then travel around the country, having a look at different sites before leaving. It has changed the dynamic tremendously.

"New market segments like that are still underdeveloped, with a long way to go. Another example is that there's a centralisation of business activity in Riyadh as the capital, and as a consequence there's a massive amount of people commuting."

Further network development for the airline will be to transform current widebody charter services into scheduled services. Travellers' interest is already there and now they can come and go more easily.

"Uzbekistan is a good example of that," Greenway said. "We deliberately did the widebody wet-lease to test the thesis, which is, 'Is there a market? Can we stimulate that market? Can we turn it into a scheduled market?' Later this year, we're going to have double daily flights on a widebody to Tashkent. All of that was chartered before.

"We'll have more of that over time," he continued. "But the widebodies coming in 2027, the A330neos, are predominantly for two customer segments. One is the labour traffic coming into the Kingdom, particularly from southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent, and the other is religious traffic."

There is also the chance with the A330s to go further west within Europe. "The whole network is fairly simple. It's everything from UK and France in particular, all the way down to southeast Asia – so the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia. That's effectively the band that we're operating in. The only thing different from that is the intent to use the A330 in slot-constrained airports, predominantly Cairo and Dubai," he explained.

ABOVE: ***Through a 2021 agreement with GE Aviation, engine maintenance for flyadeal's A320ceo fleet is carried out at Caerdav at St Athan in Wales*** CAERDAV

BELOW: ***The carrier is based at Riyadh/ King Khaled International, but has operating hubs at Jeddah/ King Abdulaziz and Dammam/ King Fahd***

One element of A330neo service not yet confirmed is the cabin configuration. "The layout has got to be worked out. In the premium cabin, there will be no more than 21 seats, but we're trying to work out whether to go for 14 or 21. It's a premium economy product – no flat beds or chandeliers," Greenway quipped. "The other thing to be decided is crew rest areas – we're looking at proper rest facilities because a lot of our flights will be over ten hours, so we'll have augmented crew. That obviously eats up some floor space."

Competition

The aircraft investment underlines the carrier's belief in a profitable future, especially as market penetration for low-fare airlines in the Middle East is only around 20%. "Compared with Europe, it's actually quite low," the CEO acknowledged.

Competition in the region comes from the likes of flydubai and Air Arabia, as well as flynas within Saudi Arabia – arguably the main competition. "I would call flynas a hybrid, not a low-cost carrier. Why? They have a business class with an empty middle seat plus a curtain and meals. Also, they have 174 seats, not the 186 we have, which is the maximum you can put on the A320," Greenway pointed out. "It's a very nice product, with lounges and a loyalty programme. I would just say it's hybrid. And that's no criticism, because if I was them, I'd do the same thing. They're going for some of the premium traffic that Saudia has enjoyed over the years, but also chasing LCC traffic."

Within the Kingdom, the dynamic will soon change as Riyadh Air begins operations. "They're very much a premium carrier akin to Qatar and Emirates, with an aspiration to become a hub carrier. So, are they going to be as big domestically as Saudia and ourselves, or even flynas? No, I don't believe they will," he remarked.

RIGHT: ***The A320ceo fleet is powered by the CFM International CFM56-5B*** AIRBUS

"Of the other established players mentioned, I would put Air Arabia as one of the best run out there. I don't classify flydubai as an LCC any more. They're a feeder for Emirates, with flatbeds and business class and lounges and everything," he added. "Again it's not a criticism, it's just how their product has advanced.

"The difference between us and the rest is our huge domestic market. Dubai, in fact the whole UAE, does not have a domestic market. That's where our growth potential lies," he declared. "At Scoot in Singapore, we didn't have a domestic market either. We had to connect, let's say, from Australia up to Greece. It was a bit more torturous. But flyadeal has the domestic market, like AirAsia X and AirAsia. When I was in Singapore we saw that around 35% of AirAsia X's customers were coming from short-haul feed by AirAsia. I don't know what the volume will be with us, but we'll be connecting people from all parts of the country."

Greenway's enthusiasm for the airline's future is backed up by a considerable pedigree. CEO and executive management roles at Swoop, Scoot, SkyEurope Airlines, Virgin Blue, Virgin Atlantic and Qantas – plus Peach, Philippine Airlines, Emirates and Jazeera Airways while at Mango Aviation Partners – create an impressive experience list. What does the man himself think are the key qualities that he brings to flyadeal?

"When you're younger, you do not appreciate what experience brings to the table. And when I say experience, I'm not talking about one specific thing. Next year will be 30 years in the industry and I can't believe it's gone that quickly since my first job at Qantas in 1996," he said.

"I now reflect on all of that. It all comes to the table when you sit there and go, 'I've seen that' or 'I know someone somewhere who has done this'. It really comes together. I suppose this is the pinnacle of my career. I'm incredibly happy with the freedom I get, the support that I get. I couldn't ask for more," Greenway concluded, suggesting that through all the current changes at flyadeal, his own role is something he wants to remain constant and not change for quite some time. AW

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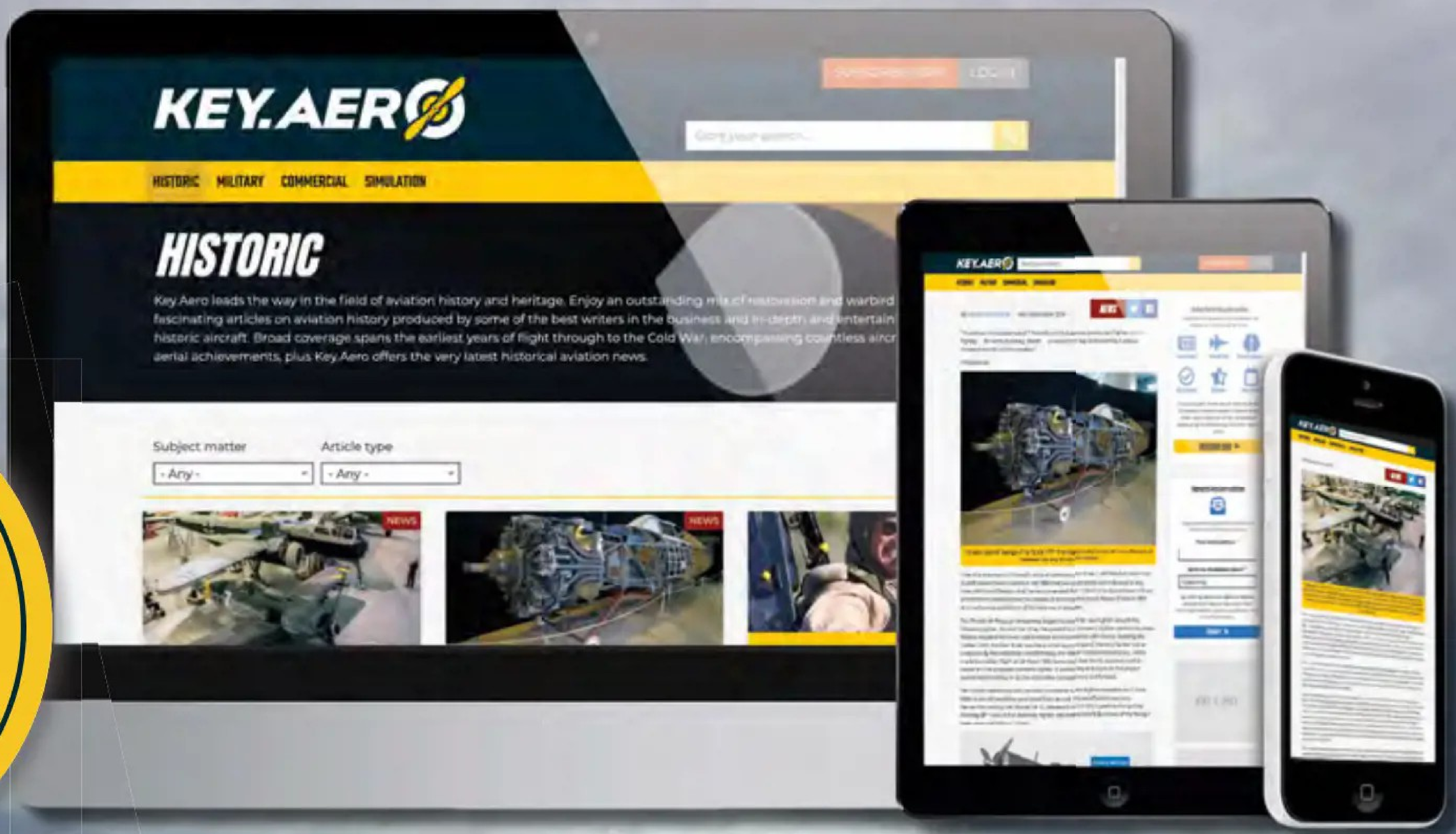

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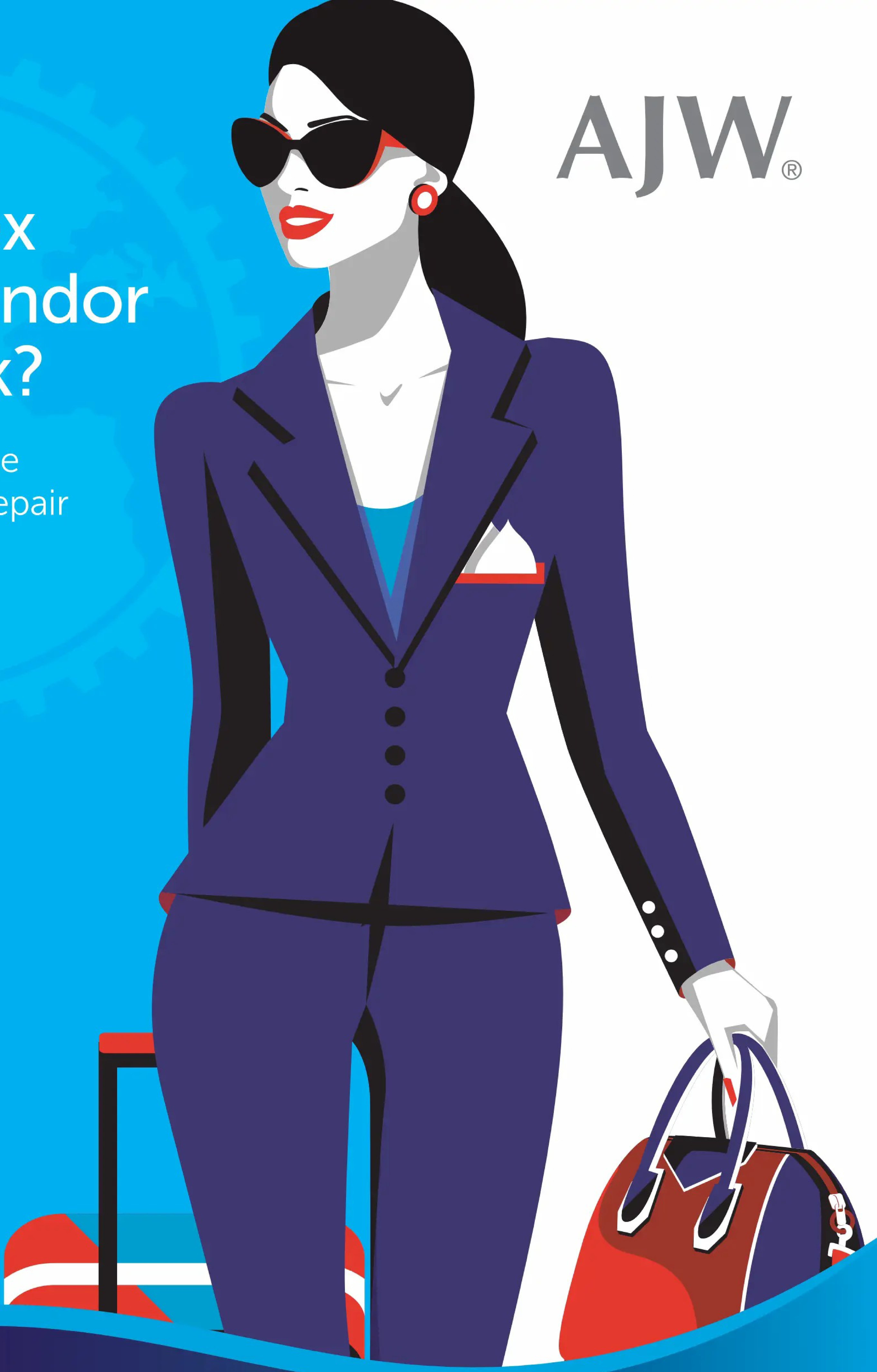

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